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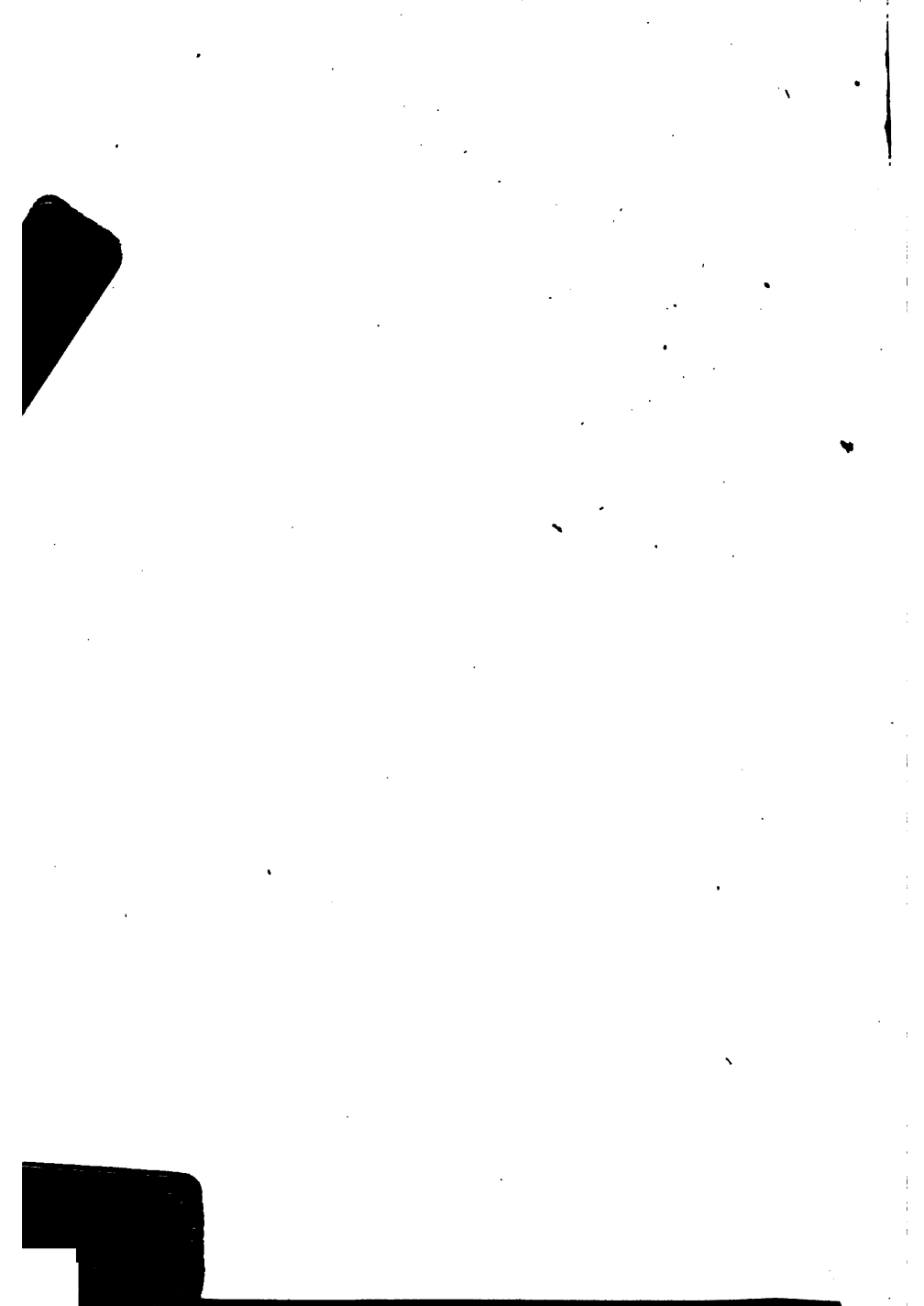
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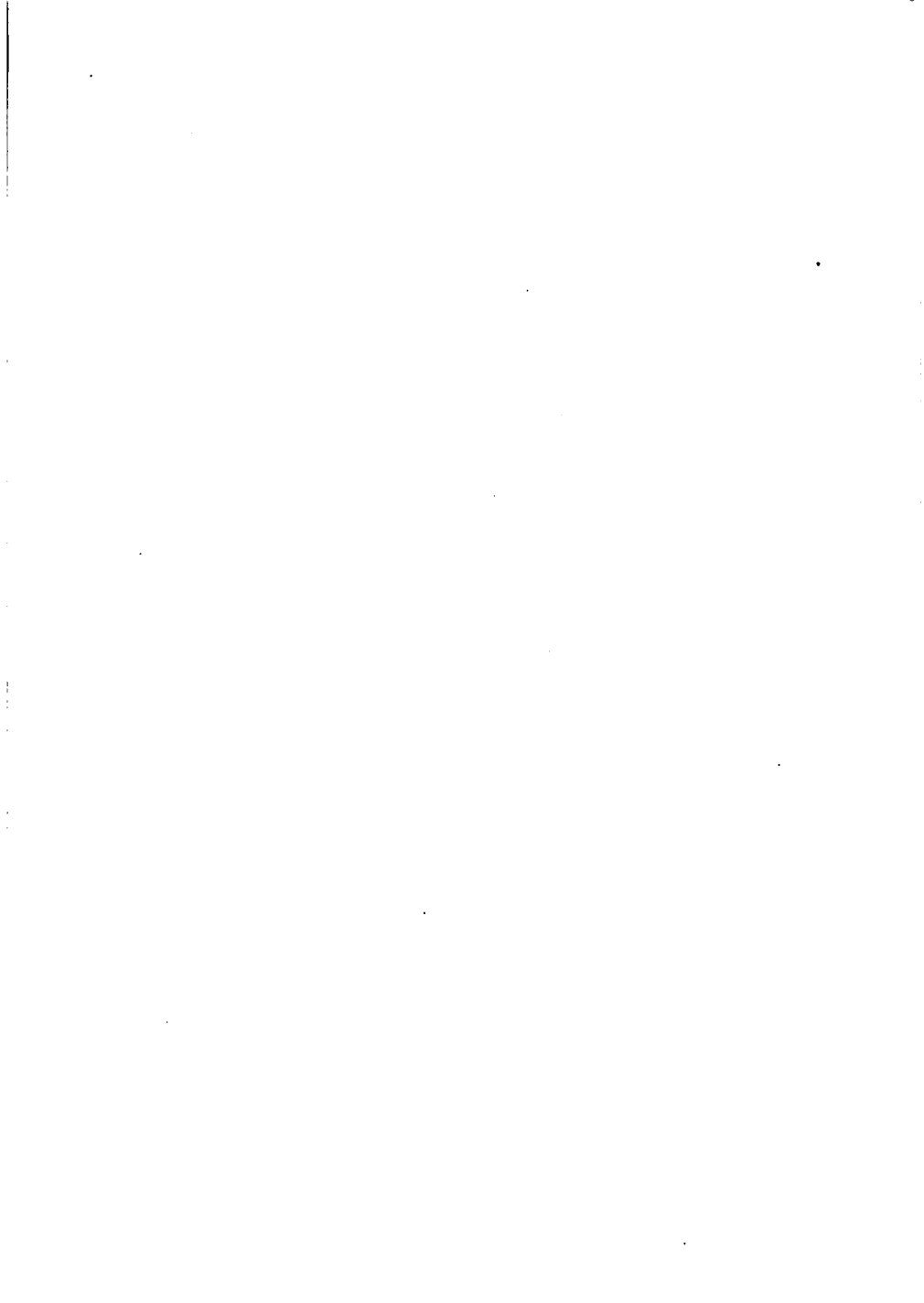
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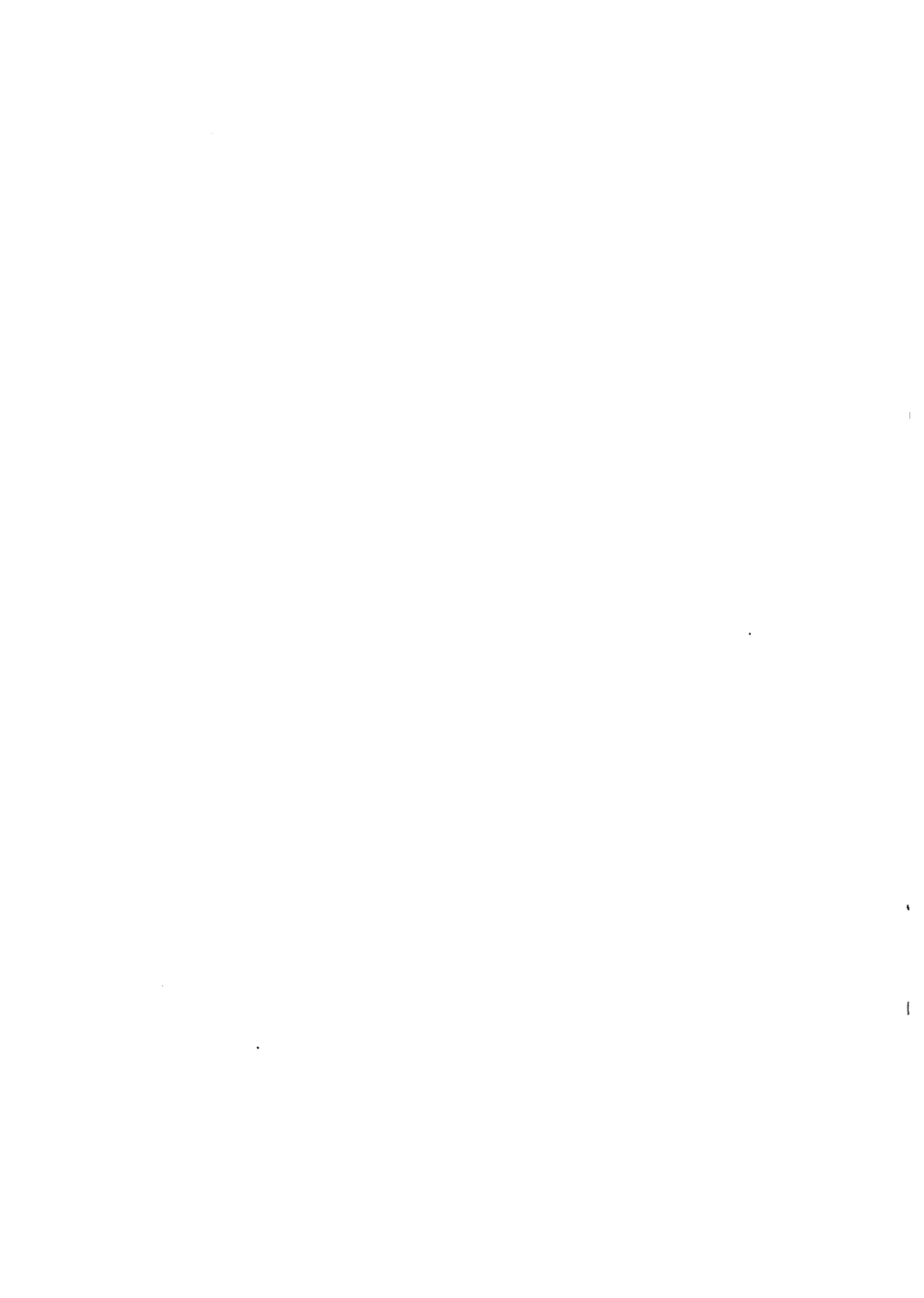












**THE VERSES OF  
JAMES W. FOLEY  
VOL. II**



# **THE VERSES OF JAMES W. FOLEY**

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**BOOK OF PLAINS AND PRAIRIE**

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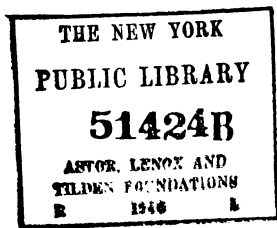
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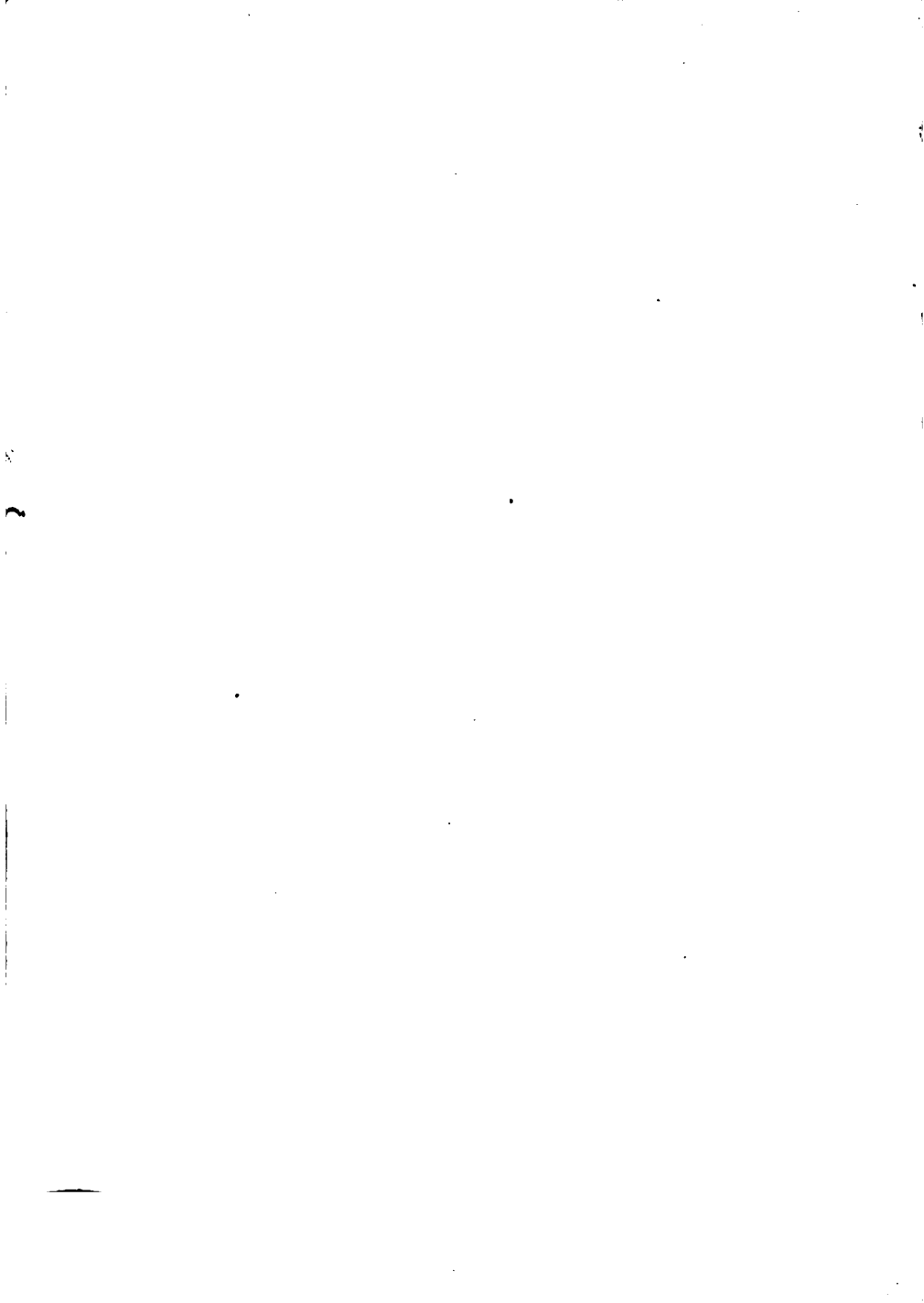


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JAMES W. FOLEY



TO THE TEACHERS AND PUPILS IN THE SCHOOLS  
OF MY STATE  
WHO HAVE BEEN A CONTINUAL INSPIRATION  
AND TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
WHO HAVE HONORED AND ENCOURAGED ME BEYOND MY  
ABILITY TO REWARD  
THESE VERSES ARE DEDICATED

W O R 19 FEB '36



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## SHOOTING UP LANIGAN'S

HE blowed inter Lanigan's, swingin' a gun,  
An' swearin',  
Declarin'  
Red rivers 'ud run  
Down Alkali Valley an' oceans o' gore  
'Ud wash sudden death on th' sage-brushy shore,  
An' shot a big hole inter Lanigan's floor.

He blowed inter Lanigan's, swingin' a gun,  
A new one,  
A blue one,  
A Colt's forty-one;  
He shot some, permiskus, where Lanigan stood,  
An' would have put Lanigan in bad fer good,  
But th' leg that he happened t' shoot in was wood.

He blowed inter Lanigan's, shoutin' like mad,  
An' ravin',  
Gun-wavin',  
Gin-ugly an' bad;  
He shot a knot hole outen Lanigan's leg,  
Th' wood one—an' shot th' bung outen a keg,  
An' nigh let the liquor all out, every dreg.

## SHOOTING UP LANIGAN'S

An' Lanigan, seein' him goin' toc far,  
Too frisky,  
(With whiskey  
Wuth cash at th' bar),  
Reached over an' pulled out a big forty-four,  
An' plugged him between th' back bar an' th' door,  
Till he was less harmful than he was before.

He blowed inter Lanigan's, lookin' for gore,  
An' tarried;  
We carried .  
Him out on a door;  
An' Lanigan took a big splinter o' leg  
An' got out his jackknife an' whittled a peg  
To stop up th' hole he shot inter th' keg!



## DROPPING PEBBLES IN THE STREAM

Drop a pebble in the water—jes' a splash an' it is gone,  
But th's half a hundred ripples circlin' on, an' on, an'  
on,

Spreadin', spreadin' from the center, flowin' on out to  
the sea,

An' th' ain't no way o' tellin' where th' end is goin'  
to be.

Drop a pebble in the water—in a minute ye forget,  
But th's little waves a-flowin' an' th's ripples circlin'  
yet;

All th' ripples flowin', flowin', to a mighty wave hev  
grown,

An' ye've disturbed a mighty river—jes' by droppin'  
in a stone.

Drop an unkind word or careless—in a minute it is  
gone,

But th's half a hundred ripples circlin' on, an' on, an'  
on.

Th' keep spreadin', spreadin', spreadin' from th' center  
as th' go,

An' th' ain't no way to stop 'em, once ye've started  
'em to flow.

Drop an unkind word or careless—in a minute ye  
forget,

But th's little waves a-flowin' an' th's ripples circlin'  
yet;

An' perhaps in some sad heart a mighty wave of tears  
ye've stirred,

An' disturbed a life 'et's happy when ye dropped an  
unkind word.

### DROPPING PEBBLES IN THE STREAM

Drop a word o' cheer an' kindness—jes' a flash an' it  
is gone,  
But th's half a hundred ripples circlin' on, an' on, an'  
on,  
Bearin' hope an' joy an' comfort on each splashin',  
dashin' wave,  
Till ye wouldn't b'lieve the volume o' th' one kind  
word ye gave.  
Drop a word o' cheer an' kindness—in a minute ye  
forget,  
But th's gladness still a-swellin' an' th's joy a-circlin'  
yet;  
An' ye've rolled a wave of comfort whose sweet music  
can be heard  
Over miles an' miles o' water—jes' by droppin' a kind  
word.

## DON' WANT TO STAY

Jes' don' seem I want to stay  
Sence she went away.  
Jes' don' seem as if I care;  
Everything seems bare  
An' empty now, an' so I say  
Jes' don' seem I want to stay.

Sun shines, bird songs in th' air,  
Jes' don' seem I care.  
All th' music o' th' spring  
Don' seem anything.  
Used to love it, but today  
Jes' don' seem I want to stay.

Walkin' roun' th' field today,  
Don' look th' same way;  
Cattle lowin', crop to spare,  
Jes' seems I don' care.  
Scent o' flowers an' new cut hay,—  
Jes' don' seem I want to stay.

Used to like to hear th' breeze  
Rustlin' through th' trees;  
Thought th' grass a-growin' green  
Prettiest thing I seen.  
All changed sence she went away,  
Jes' don' seem to want to stay.



## WHY THE JURY DISAGREED

I AM an honest man, I am ; ez fair ez a man kin be ;  
Fer anything that's on th' square, I'm willin' to agree ;  
But when I'm right, no set o' men kin argify with me.

I heerd th' witnesses myself an' I heerd th' lawyers,  
too ;  
I heerd th' jedge's charge, 'y jing, that some of 'em  
slept right through,  
An' that man, he wa'n't guilty, sir, no more 'n me er  
you.

Now, what's th' use t' argify when y' know right where  
ye 're at ?  
If my mind's made up, 'y jing, I'll stay, y' kin bet yer  
Sunday hat ;  
When y' can't git nothin' in th' draw, my doctern is,  
stand pat.

Ten of 'em stood for th' feller's guilt on th' fust vote,  
instantly ;  
One of 'em voted his ballot blank an' th' other one  
was me,  
An' of all th' stubborn, senseless mules, I swan I never  
see !

## WHY THE JURY DISAGREED

I 'low I know what's evidence, an' I got some slight  
idee

Of law myself, though I don't perless to be no LL.D.  
But th' ain't no 'leven men on airth kin bulldoze Silas  
Lee.

They argified an' argified, with now an' then a swear;  
I set an' listened to 'em talk an' never turned a hair,  
Fer when I tired o' hearin' 'em, I jes' played solitaire.

Thank Heaven I ain't no stubborn fool; I got some  
common sense;  
I take my law fr'm th' jedge, y' jing, an' I sift th' evi-  
dence;  
But when it comes to my idees, wal, I ain't on th'  
fence.

They all got middlin' temperish when th' courthouse  
clock struck nine;  
But nary a one of 'em guv in, clear down th' stubborn  
line;  
They jes' adhered to their idees an' I adhered t' mine.

John Scruggs, he 'lowed t' calcalate the jury orto rise;  
He had some chores t' do at hum an' he said he'd com-  
permise;  
An' I said I'd stay till they let him off—er th' stars  
fell fr'm th' skies.

## WHY THE JURY DISAGREED

'Twas 'long 'bout midnight time, I guess; I'd beat my  
sixteenth game  
O' solitaire, an' th' light burned dim with a sickly sort  
o' flame,  
When Jason Benson up an' 'lowed how I was all t'  
blame!

I riz right up fr'm off my cheer an' fetched him one  
so free  
That I 'low y' couldn't count th' stars that Jason Ben-  
son see;  
An' Jason's cousin (through his first wife) he tuk a  
smash at me!

We mixed it purty middlin' warm; Wash Jenkins, he  
struck out  
At Jason's cousin (through his first wife) an' fetched  
him sech a clout  
That his nose was flatter 'n griddle-cakes, an' th' blood  
jes' spurted out.

Hamp Hawkins slid down underneath th' table—Hamp  
was slim—  
But someone guv' th' lamp a shove an' overturned th'  
glim.  
Hamp's clothes tuk fire fr'm th' kerosene an' durn nigh  
finished *him*.

## WHY THE JURY DISAGREED

Win Watson mounted of a cheer an' jes' begin t' shout  
"Peace! Peace!" when Jason Benson he fetched him a  
rousin' clout  
That laid Win len'thwise on th' floor, knocked plumb,  
completely out!

Then Scruggs he laid a-holt o' me, an' Jason grabbed  
my throat,  
Both holdin' on so cussed tight I couldn't peel my coat,  
An' Jason's cousin (through his first wife), he says:  
"Let's take a vote!"

Then all of 'em voted fer his guilt—every las' one but  
me;  
They never had no notion 't all of tryin' to agree,  
So I went back t' solitaire, fer y' can't bluff Silas Lee.

Now that's th' livin', gospel truth, fer any man t' read,  
It ain't fixed up t' favor me, an' it ain't no lyin' screed;  
Ez fur ez I'm consarned, y' jing, th' jury *was* agreed!

## A HORSE TRADE

"Hello!" says I.

"Hello!" says he.

I never see the man afore.

"Swap?" says I.

"Dunno," says he.

"Mebbe, mebbe—I ain't shore."

"Th' bay?" says I.

"Th' gray?" says he.

"Swap!" says we, an' both unhitched.

"Fine horse," says I.

"O' course," says he;

An' in a minute we had switched.

"Git up!" says I.

"Git up!" says he.

An' both them horses stood stock still!

"Balk?" says I.

"Yep!" says he.

"Mine too!" s' I, laughin', fit to kill.

"Say!" says I.

"Hey?" says he.

"Guess that's horse apiece," says we.

"Good day!" says I.

"Good day!" says he.

Best joke, b' gosh, I ever see!

## THE MORTGAGED FARM

GOIN', goin', goin'—gone! Mother, dear, don't cry;  
Th' old home's passed t' other hands, but mebbe, by  
an' by,

We may save an' buy another, though no place'll ever  
be

As dear as this one that we've lost has been t' you an'  
me.

Goin', goin', goin'—gone! Mother, come away;  
Th' ol' farm's been knocked down an' sold—it does no  
good t' stay;

We've tried our best t' save it, but it wasn't ordered so.  
It ain't our home no longer—Mother, dear, le's go!

I don't know as I ever see th' ol' farm look so fine.  
Never see a deeper green on every shrub an' vine;  
Clover blossoms never smelled so fresh an' sweet,  
somehow,

Lilacs never grew so thick, it seems, as th' do now;  
The ol' white house with its green blinds, the woodbine  
creepin' on,

'Twon't do no harm, I guess, t' take a las' look 'fore  
we're gone.

Tried our best t' pay th' debt, we did, th' Lord mus'  
know,

But somehow couldn't make it quite—Mother, dear,  
le's go.

## THE MORTGAGED FARM

Goin', goin', goin'—gone! I seem t' hear it yet;  
Seem t' hear the auctioneer—my eyes somehow get  
    wet;  
Gone t' pay th' mor'gagee, an' we are crowded out.  
Gone! So many things are gone that folks don't think  
    about.  
Every blade o' grass an' tree, every foot o' ground  
Has some hauntin' memory, some sweetness clingin'  
    'round,  
Some memory for you an' me, that other folks don't  
    know;  
It seems somehow the're speakin' now—Mother, dear,  
    le's go.

Goin', gone! We couldn't save it, Mother, dear; we  
    tried,  
But everything went criss-cross—th' cows took sick  
    an' died,  
We had to sell th' horses—the farmin' didn't pay,  
An' troubles sort o' double-quickened—sometimes the'  
    come that way.  
Goin', gone! The pasture lands; th' dairy house beside  
Th' brook; the first house that we built, where Sue and  
    Johnny died.  
T' other folks it's simply losin' of a bit o' land,  
But the's a loss t' you an' me that they can't under-  
    stand.

## THE MORTGAGED FARM

Goin', goin', goin'—gone! I wonder what's th' use  
Twinin' heartstrings 'round an' 'round jes' t' tear 'em  
loose.

Goin', gone! Th' way o' life; why, th' good Lord  
knows;

Buildin' up for years an' years, an' then away she  
goes!

Hopes or homes, it's jes' th' same— what we build  
about,

Other hands mus' reap th' fruits an' we are crowded  
out;

Story always jes' th' same, fr'm th' light o' dawn  
T' th' twilight's mist an' shade—hopes goin', goin',  
gone.



## 'NOUGH FOR ME

SOMETIMES I think I'll thrash him, good,  
He needs it bad, I'm sure ;  
An' sometimes—well, I b'lieve I would,  
'N then I can't endure  
T' tech th' 'musin' little kid,  
For when he smiles, y' see,  
He looks jes' like his mother did,  
An' that's enough for me.

I guess a hundred times or more  
I've taken him inside  
Th' bedroom there, an' closed th' door  
An' tried an' tried an' tried  
T' bring myself to strike him, once,  
Jes' once—an' then I see  
His mother's smile on his wet face,  
An' that's enough for me.

## 'NOUGH FOR ME

First thing I know I'm sittin' there  
Pettin' th' little chap,  
An' strokin' of his curly hair,  
Holdin' him in my lap,  
An' dreamin' of her—seein' her  
Jes' as she used to be,  
An' somethin' makes my eyes t' blur,  
An' me cry silently.

He's got the same brown eyes she had,  
An' th' same silky hair;  
Looks so like her, th' little lad,  
That—well, I jes' don' dare  
To lay a finger rough on him;  
'T 'd almos' seem as though  
I was a-bein' harsh to her,  
An' so I let him go.

He ain't a bad boy—no, he ain't,  
Jes' mischievous, that's all.  
In all his makeup th' ain't a taint  
O' meanness—an' I call  
T' mind when things she used to do  
Exactly like he does,  
I thought was jes' th' cutest an'  
Th' dearest ever was.

## 'NOUGH FOR ME

Y' know sometimes he'll come t' me,  
An' say to me: "Say, Dad,  
Y' ain't goin' to whip me, now, are ye?  
I ain't been very bad."  
An' then he'll twist, an' sort o' smile;  
My eyes get blurred and dim;  
Th' ain't enough gold in th' world  
T' hire me t' tech him.

Folks say I'm spoilin' him; may be  
I am, but I don't dare  
T' tech him rough—he looks like she  
Did, an' so I don't care.  
He puts his little arms aroun'  
My neck, an' I can see  
Her in his eyes, so big an' brown,  
An' that's enough for me.

## OUT OVER THERE

I SEE the transport's here at last ; the soldier boys have  
come.

I hear the bugles brayin' an' the beatin' o' the drum ;  
I can see the flags a-flyin' and the bands begin to play,  
An' it seems to me they sailed from Frisco only yes-  
terday.

I'd like to join the shoutin', but I couldn't cheer a  
note ;

There's a lump that's always risin' and a chokin' in my  
throat.

They're marchin' down the street by twos ; I'm watchin'  
every pair,

But I know my boy ain't with 'em—they have left him  
over there.

I know a fellow ought to try to put aside his tears,  
An' he ought to join the shoutin' an' the ringin',  
rousin' cheers.

But say ! It's hard to stand here an' to see 'em marchin'  
on,

An' to know that my boy's missin' from them marchin'  
ranks, an' gone.

Say, if I could only see him, with his head erect an'  
high,

An' if he could know I was a-watchin' of him passin'  
by !

An' know that in that cheerin' he was gettin' of his  
share !

But he can't—the Lord saw fit to muster him out over  
there.

## OUT OVER THERE

There's so many, Lord, so many; an' my boy was all  
I had,

An' it seems you might 'a' left him to his poor old lovin'  
Dad.

His mother died so long ago; he never knew her face,  
An' Daddy's breast in childhood was his only restin'  
place.

An' when the call for volunteers was made, he come  
to me,

An' he pleaded to go with 'em, an' he begged so  
earnestly,

An' I says: "He's all I've got, Lord, an' I know you'll  
surely spare

My boy, an' let him come back." An' he's lyin' over  
there.

An' I thought to go to Frisco, an' to greet him when  
he come;

An' to stay till he was mustered out, an' then to bring  
him home.

An' so I'm here to see the boys,—to hear the shouts  
an' cheers;

A poor old father watchin' 'em through eyes that's  
blurred with tears.

I know he's not among 'em, but it sort o' seems to me,  
That he can't be lyin' out there dead, across the sobbin'  
sea.

There's so many boys, so many, that the Lord was  
good to spare,

That I can't believe my boy is in his grave out over  
there.

## WRITING A LETTER HOME

HE wrote home: "Mother, dear, I have  
A place that will not fail.  
I'm working for the Commonwealth."  
( 'Twas true—he was in jail.)

"I board and lodge at my employer's  
House." ( 'Twas so, you see.)  
"I have a private room, that has  
Been set apart for me.

"My habits are quite regular.  
I do each bidden task.  
My food"—( 'Twas bread and water, lone;)  
"Is all that I can ask.

"I'm held above my fellow men  
And my companions here."  
(He was the only prisoner  
Kept in the upper tier.)

"I had some hope that I might come  
To see you Christmas Day;  
But as it is, I do not see  
How I can get away.

## WRITING A LETTER HOME

"I am to make a journey soon,"  
(He was condemned, you know,  
For murder), "but I cannot say  
Yet, just where I will go."

The sheriff wrote, after 'twas done:  
"Your son died suddenly.  
'Twas just this morning he dropped off"—  
(The gallows, don't you see.)

"Your son stood high among us here,"  
(The gallows was quite tall.)  
"And hundreds gathered at the last"—  
(They did—to see him fall.)

The dear old lady read the news,  
And said, wiping her eye:  
"Ah, well—since he must be cut down,  
I'm glad he stood so high."

## THE VILLAGE CHURCH

WE'RE off for the village church today—Mother an'  
Moll an' me,  
Come fr'm th' city, a hundred miles, to go, especially.  
Been goin' to brownstone gospel shops, imposin' an'  
grand an' swell,  
But I don't feel that hankerin' there for heaven or that  
proper fear o' hell  
That I allus did in th' little church in th' village we  
used to tend,  
Where th' green woodbine an' th' ivy twine, an' the  
songbirds' voices blend  
With th' village choir, an' the gospel hymns rang out  
on th' summer air,  
An' th' Lord sort o' seemed to come right down an'  
sit among us there.

Off for th' village church today—there's a tear in  
Mother's eye,  
An' another one in my own, I guess, but I couldn't  
tell ye why;  
Mebbe it's 'cause we was married there, so many years  
ago,  
An' our boy lies there in his grave, asleep, an' th'  
music seems to flow  
Out through the vine-clad window in a sort o' lullaby,  
As th' breath o' God might kiss th' sod where the souls  
all sleeping lie.  
Th' air's so still an' the sweet hymns fill our hearts  
with peace today,  
An' th' Lord sort o' seems to come right down an' kiss  
our tears away.



## THE VILLAGE CHURCH

There's a somethin' grand 'bout the village church—I  
can't jes' tell ye why,  
But ye seem to get right close to God, an' ye stand  
there silently,  
Breathin' a prayer so earnest like, yer eyes all blurred  
an' dim,  
As though He was standin' there an' ye was whisperin'  
to Him.  
An' th' little organ's mellow tones, an' th' music seems  
so grand,  
Because it tells a tale of love that yer heart can under-  
stand,  
An' yer heart feels warm with love that ye want the  
world to know an' share,  
An' th' Lord sort o' seems to come right down and sit  
among us there.

I got to live in th' city, 'cause I got my int'rests there,  
But Mother an' me, when we come to die, are  
both a-goin' to share  
A lot in the village churchyard, where our lost boy lies  
asleep;  
An' though our lives is happy, sometimes we sit an'  
weep,  
An' sort o' yearn for th' time to come when th' Lord's  
own lullaby  
Floats through th' vine-clad window above us as we  
lie;  
When our boy shall wake and we shall take his hand at  
th' Judgment day,  
Kise from th' sod, in th' steps o' God—we three—an'  
go away.

## AN ART CRITICISM

A RAGGED kid in a torn straw hat,  
With his hair stuck through, an' a sassy smile,  
An' one suspender 'crost, like that—  
Wal—it may be art, but it ain't my style.

Diggin' th' sand with his bare big toe,  
An' a big loose patch sewed to his knee;  
Shovin' his hands in his pockets—so;  
Why they call that art, dogged ef I see.

Why, th' little runt 'et's painted there,  
With his eyes half closed, an' winkin' down,  
Th' sassy little rat, I swear  
I've seen him, right in my own town.

Them funny freckles, big an' brown,  
'N' them ragged pants an' that torn straw hat—  
I bet I kin find, right in our town,  
A dozen kids 'et look like that.

37 311155M

...the ... more ... like that  
... by ...  
... that I ...  
... down ...

"I can almost hear  
 the voice in my head. Dad? an' throw  
 the car in front of me on the car!  
 I can hear the car just as if I know.

"You know him? A city chap  
 who came in with five hundred gold  
 and bought the land a snap.  
 You know how he got sold.

" ~~There~~ <sup>It</sup> is a torn straw hat.  
 " ~~I~~ <sup>I</sup> have seen a hundred times. I bet;  
 " ~~Give~~ <sup>Give</sup> me out that much for that!  
 " ~~There~~ <sup>There</sup>, my fools ain't all dead yet!

## STUBBED HIS TOE

DID ye ever pass a youngster 'et 'd been an' stubbed  
his toe,  
An' was cryin' by the roadside sort o' quiet like an'  
slow;  
A-holdin' of his dusty foot, all hard an' brown an'  
bare,  
An' tryin' to keep fr'm his eyes th' tears that's gath-  
erin' there?  
Ye hear him sort o' sobbin' like, an' snufflin' of his  
nose,  
Ye stop an' pat his head an' some way try t' ease his  
woes;  
Ye treat him sort o' kind like, an' th' fust thing that  
y' know  
He's up an' off an' smilin'—clean forgot he stubbed  
his toe.

'Long th' road o' human life ye see a fellow travelin'  
slow,  
An' like as not ye'll find he's some poor chap that's  
stubbed his toe.  
He was makin' swimmin' headway, but he bumped  
into a stone,  
An' his friends kep' hurryin' onward an' they left him  
here alone.

## STUBBED HIS TOE

He ain't sobbin' er ain't sniffin'—he's too old for tears  
an' cries,  
But he's grievin' jes' as earnest, ef it only comes in  
sighs;  
An' it does a heap o' good, sometimes, to go a little  
slow,  
To say a word o' comfort to th' man that's stubbed  
his toe.

Ye're never sure yerself, an' th' ain't no earthly way  
t' know  
Jes' when it's goin' t' come yer time t' trip an' stub  
yer toe;  
Today ye're smilin', happy, in th' bright sun's heat  
an' glow,  
Tomorrow ye're a' shiverin' as ye're trudgin' through  
th' snow.  
Jes' when ye think ye got th' world th' fastest in yer  
grip  
Is th' very time, ye'll find, et ye're th' likeliest t'  
slip;  
'N' it's mighty comfortin' t' have some fellow stop, I  
know,  
An' speak t' ye an' kind o' help ye when ye've stubbed  
yer toe.

## PERSEVERANCE

SAYS he to me, says he, one night,  
A-shiverin' with mortal fright,  
An' twistin' of his handkerchief,  
A-tremblin', shakin' like a leaf,

Says he to me, says he:  
"Maria," sort o' halted then,  
An' coughed, an' then began again,  
"Maria, I've got somethin' here  
That for as much as 'leven year  
I've tried t' say t' ye."

My! My! My heart jes' beat an' beat,  
When he come up an' took his seat  
Right nex' t' me an' took my hand,  
An' when he squeezed it—Oh, my land!

I was jes' all unstrung.  
So then I says to him, says I  
To him, says I: "What is it, Si?"  
An' I jes' set an' set an' set  
An' sort o' fearful like, an' yet  
So glad he'd found his tongue.

## PERSEVERANCE

An' then he says to me, says he,  
A-sort o' sof' an' tremblin'ly,  
"Maria"—an' I set an' set,  
A-wonderin' if he'd never get  
Aroun' t' any more.

'N then I says to him, says I  
To him, I says: "What is it, Si?  
I b'lieve you were addressin' me?"  
'An' Si he set there silently,  
As bad off as before.

An' then I says to him, says I,  
"A lovely evenin', ain't it, Si?  
Jes' seems to sort o' lift ye 'bove  
Yerself an' make ye think o' love."

My! I was gettin' bold!  
'An' Si, he got so mortal 'fraid,  
I thought he'd run, but, no, he staid,  
An' then he says: "My hens they lay  
Nigh fifteen dozen eggs today."  
An' that was all he told.

My! My! My blood run hot an' cold,  
T' think that he could sit an' hold  
My hand, an' be so mortal 'fraid  
He'd talk 'bout eggs his hens had laid.

So then I says, says I,  
"If that is what ye've tried to tell  
For 'leven years, ye've told it well."  
An' Si, he says: "How could ye say  
That, when them eggs only today  
Was laid. 'Taint that," says Si.

## PERSEVERANCE

So there we set an' set an' set  
Till I jes' got so desperate  
My nerves was all a-flutterin'  
To see him set a-stutterin'

An' me in sech suspense.  
An' then I says to him, says I,  
"Was it somethin' about me, Si?"  
An' he said: "Yep!—I wonder how  
That everlastin' brindle cow  
Broke through my pasture fence?"

An' then I says, an' sort o' slow:  
"Si, was that 'leven years ago,  
An' hev ye been so mortal 'fraid  
To tell me that before?" I said,  
Somewhat sarcastic'ly.  
An' Si, he says: "Why, course it wa'n't,  
I jes' chanced to be thinkin' on't,  
An' wonderin' how that critter got  
Through that fence, when them posts was sot  
So tarnal deep," says he.

My goodness me! I never see  
A man need help so much as he,  
But I kep' patient, an' says I:  
"Is it somethin' ye're wantin', Si?"  
An' he says: "Yep. It be!"  
I knew my chance was mighty slim  
If I sh'd set an' wait for him,  
An' so I jes' cast all aside  
My nat'ral modesty an' pride,  
An' says: "Si, was it me?"



## PERSEVERANCE

Well, say! If ye could see Si throw  
His arms 'bout me! "How did ye know?"  
Says he. An' then he says to me—  
Oh, jes' as sweet an' lovin'ly,  
    With sech a happy smile:  
"Maria, jes' as sure as fate,  
I knew that if I'd only wait,  
No odds how many times I'd flunk,  
Thet some time I'd jes' get up spunk  
    To tell ye after 'while."

## FRIENDS

THE's a little touch o' winter in th' air,  
The's leaves a-droppin', droppin' everywhere,  
    The's gusts o' snow a-blowin',  
    But the's evergreen a-growin',  
    Lookin' fresher 'n brighter 'n ever,  
    Jes' to show 'et th' ain't never  
Any time when all th' trees is stripped an' bare.

The's a little touch o' trouble in th' air,  
The's friends a-droppin', droppin' everywhere,  
    But the's some 'et's clingin' faster,  
    Even when ye've met disaster,  
    Jes' to show 'et th' ain't ever  
    Any trouble 'et can sever  
Friends 'et's evergreen—th' kind o' friends 'et's rare.

MISS TABBY TATTLE READS THE  
WEEKLY PAPER

"So Lidy Thomas wants a girl f'r housework! Well,  
I do declare  
That woman never keeps one more'n two weeks!  
Somethin' wrong up there!  
I heerd her las' girl tellin' how she didn't git enough  
to eat,  
But that was only servants' talk—sech gossip as I  
won't repeat!  
An' Lucy Brown is gone to teachin' music down at  
Bridger's Dell  
An' quit the church as organist! Well, I allow it's  
just as well,  
From what I've heerd about her bein' mighty sweet  
on Parson Brooks;  
An' him a married man! I say there's danger in too  
much good looks!

"Joe Gudger's married! Well, I vow if sech rapsca-  
lious folks as him  
Can find a partner f'r their joys my chances ain't so  
mighty slim!  
Close! Why, his first wife's sister says she'll swear it  
with her dyin' breath  
Joe Gudger was so stingy that his first wife simply  
starved to death!

MISS TABBY TATTLE READS THE WEEKLY PAPER

Another party up at Blake's! My, how some folks  
can put on airs

An' snub their betters puzzles me! Why, Toby Toser's  
clerk declares

They owe f'r three months' groceries—they never pay  
and never will;

An' Toby's wore a pair o' shoes out goin' up to git  
th' bill!

"Jane Hitchcock an' that gawky Burns hev gone an'  
married! Well, I do

Declare it's time he popped to her if ever he intended  
to!

He's been her stiddy beau eight years an' but f'r Jim  
Burns I allow

She might 'a' been a happy wife an' had a family by  
now!

An' Ezry Cowles 's got th' grip! Well, if it cost a  
cent t' git

Y' can mark down that Ezry Cowles 'd be a long time  
gittin' it!

There's only one thing that would tempt that man t'  
quit this life o' sin,

An' that would be a cut-rate sale on coffins, with a  
hearse throwed in.

# **MISS TABBY TATTLE READS THE WEEKLY PAPER**

**"Lem Wilson's addin' to his house! I wonder where  
poor Lem'll git  
Th' cash. Ain't got th' mor'gage paid he had to put  
on t'other, yit.  
Now that's what comes fr'm weddin' style; Lem was  
a thrifty, savin' soul  
Until he married that Sue Clay, an' she's just goin'  
through him whole!  
Tod White is dead. Poor Tod! His chance 'o reachin'  
Heaven 's mighty slim.  
But bein' as he's dead I won't be one to say no bad  
of him.  
Th' paper's sort o' runnin' down, at least accordin' to  
my views;  
I don't know as I ever see th' Weekly with so little  
news."**

## A PARTING

"Don' go, Bill, don' go!  
I know it mus' seem slow  
Here on th' farm fer a boy like you;  
I know the's many a chore to do;  
Not much in th' way o' company,  
'Cept what ye git from Ma an' me;  
An' it's temptin' to think o' th' world so wide,  
An' all o' th' pleasures o' life outside  
Our quiet little home life here;  
But, Bill, it'll seem so hard an' queer  
Fer Ma an' me, as we allus do,  
Not to sit an' feel so proud o' you  
When we see you 'roun'. I know it's slow,  
But, Bill, I wisht you wouldn't go!

"Don' go, Bill, don' go!  
Ma's tears jes' flow an' flow  
When she's packin' up yer trunk—an' I—  
Well, Bill, I ain't much on th' cry,  
But th' ol' man's heart is heavy, Bill,  
The's an achin' there that won't be still.  
Jim's gone, an' though a year's gone by,  
It don' seem right he had to die;  
Then Jack lef' home, an' Lou is wed,  
An' mebbe even Jack is dead,  
Fer we haven't heard a word from him.  
Bill! Bill! Our flock has grown so slim,  
Ye're all we've got now, Bill, an' so  
I jes' can't bear to let ye go!

## 'A PARTING

"What d'ye say, Bill? Ye won't go!  
Boy, boy, ye'll never know  
What a load ye've raised fr'm th' ol' folks' heart,  
Fer we couldn't bear to see ye start.  
Come, here, Bill, let me hug ye once;  
Well, drat me fer a sneakin' dunce,  
If my blame ol' eyes ain't filled with tears,  
When I feel like whoopin' up with cheers.  
An' Bill, let's go tell Mother so,  
That her boy says he ain't goin' to go."

## AN UP-COUNTRY FEUD

I AIN'T on good terms 'ith Wilson; he ain't on good terms 'ith me.

Neighbored fer nigh onto ten years, friendly as friendly could be,

An' then fell out over a horse trade, crooked as ever you see.

Wilson, he owned a big ches'nut trotter—a spankin' fine horse.

Used to go splittin' th' breezes 'long of a quarter-mile course,

Fine lookin' animal, Stranger; plenty o' gimp, speed, and force.

I had a pacer could go *some*; bright bay, almost a blood-red,

Nobby an' stylish fer light work, groomed to a shine, an' well fed,

But a durn nasty habit o' balkin', when th' notion got into her head.



## AN UP-COUNTRY FEUD

Wilson druv over one mornin'; sez t' me, sez he: "Say,  
Win,  
Wisht y'd come 'long 'ith yer stop-watch, held fer a  
quarter-mile spin."  
Had th' big ches'nut hitched up t' a road-cart an', sez  
he: "Jump in!"

Say! He showed speed fer that quarter! Fast as I  
ever see made!  
"Wilson," sez I, "he's a winner; puts my bay horse  
in th' shade."  
He sez to me, sez he: "Winston, how'd y' consider  
a trade?"

"I ain't a fast-horse man, Winston; I ain't jes' nachelly  
fit  
T' own sech a stepper as this is; that is th' reason of  
it."  
He talked so almighty hones' I thought that he was—  
an' I bit!

Seemed like a sin when I guv him some cash an' that  
balky ol' bay;  
Sort o' like robbin' th' feller—giving him swamp-grass  
fer hay;  
But tradin' of horses is tradin'—an' that's about all  
there's t' say.

## AN UP-COUNTRY FEUD

It happened in county-fair season; I druv over there  
th' same day,  
Entered my horse in th' races, chucklin' th' whole of  
th' way,  
An' found when I got there that Wilson had entered  
th' race 'ith my bay.

He grinned when he see me a-comin' a-drivin' his  
ches'nut, an' I  
Fer th' life o' me couldn't help laughin' t' think o' th'  
fun, by an' by,  
When he druv that ol' bay in th' races an' found out  
her weakness! My, my!

Nex' day when th' free-for-all started, my ches'nut  
shot into fust place,  
Went t' th' quarter like lightnin'—th' wa'n't nothin'  
else in th' race,  
Went at a two minute clip, sir, but couldn't stand up  
t' th' pace.

Fer when we got up t' th' quarter, my ches'nut went  
down on his knees,  
Gaspin' fer breath ev'ry minute, with an onhealthy  
sort of a sneeze.  
Wind-broken! Yes, sir, by thunder! Had a regular  
wind-broken wheeze!

## AN UP-COUNTRY FEUD

Mad! I was as mad as a hatter! Mad till I jes' couldn't talk.

But I looked down th' track at th' starters, an' there stood th' bay at a balk,  
While a crow-bait from down in th' country was winnin' th' race in a walk.

I ain't on good terms 'ith Wilson; he ain't 'ith me, as y' see.

Neighbored fer nigh onto ten years, friendly as friendly could be.

He says I done *him* dirt in a horse trade; I say that *he* done it 't *me*.

## THE DIFFERENCE

SOMETIMES when Pa gets mad because  
I bust some of his household laws,  
He says: "Look here, you rascal, you,  
I'll whale you, sir, that's what I'll do."  
An' Ma, she just turns up her nose,  
An' sits there in refined repose,  
An' higher still her nose she tilts;  
An' Pa don't lick me—he just wilts.

When Ma gets mad because I do  
Some little thing she said not to,  
She don't talk loud and wild like Dad,  
But just says: "Will, come here, my lad."  
An' Pa don't get no chance to tilt  
His nose—an' Ma, well, she don't wilt;  
She just leads Willie boy away  
Out to the shed and makes him lay  
Acrost her lap—seems just like play,  
'Cept Willie don't sit down that day.

THE SONG

Smile with me, smile with me,

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me?

Smile with me, smile with me?

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me;

Smile with me, smile with me?

## A WAYSIDE GREETING

Feelin' purty happy—won't y' stop an' smile with me?  
You an' I are brothers, or at least we ought t' be;  
Lord knows where we came from an' th' Lord knows  
where we go,

Mebbe I can help you if you'll stop an hour or so;  
Griefs are made for healin' of an' tears are made t' dry,  
Drop in here an' rest y' till th' shower passes by,  
Put up an' be welcome at th' Inn o' Sympathy,  
Feelin' purty happy—won't y' stop an' smile with me?

Feelin' purty happy—won't y' stop an' smile with me?  
I'm just sort o' restin' by th' roadside, don't y' see;  
Just a pilgrim passin' with a bit o' smile an' song,  
Over th' same pathway that th's millions tramped  
along;

I've just leased an acre, an' I've reared a bungalow,  
Put some flowers near it, that will bloom a day or so,  
Tried t' make it homelike an' th' cheer of it is free,  
Feelin' purty happy—won't y' stop an' smile with me?

### “US CONSUMERS”

Ezry Pembroke says, says he,  
He is chargin' more f'r tea  
Sence th' freight rates riz, becuz  
Freight is higher 'n it wuz.  
Ezry says that him an' me  
Bears th' higher cost o' tea  
When he puts it on my bill,  
“An’,” says he, “we allus will.”

Ezry Pembroke says hard facts  
Shows high tariff is a tax,  
An' the higher price an' sich  
All goes to th' robber rich;  
When they charge him more, why he  
Has to charge it up to me.  
“Us consumers pays th' bill,”  
Ezry says, “an' allus will.”

## **"US CONSUMERS"**

Ezry Pembroke says when his  
Hullsale price of goods is riz  
He jest charges up to me  
What th' extry cost'll be.  
Ezry says it's jest his aim  
To keep profits 'bout th' same.  
"Us consumers pays th' bill,"  
Ezry says, "an' allus will."

Ezry says it's plain t' see  
How it's up to him an' me.  
When th' price of goods is riz  
He pays more an' more f'r his;  
An' he'll charge th' extry share  
Up to me t' make it fair.  
"Us consumers pays th' bill,"  
Ezry says, "an' allus will."



## POET AND PEASANT

HE was a simple countryman, a genial soul and kind.  
The evening was poetic, and to imagery inclined,  
I gazed out o'er the stream and field. "How musical  
the leaves!"

I cried. "What web of melody their subtle rustling  
weaves!

The crystal waters murmur down the banks of moss  
and fern,

Adown the vale the sombre wail of lingering loon or  
hern.

Shrill, shrill the cry of night birds high, forth-floating  
in the air,

And fairy footfalls trip and tinkle where the fleece  
floats there,

In boundless billows of the unflecked, azure sea of  
blue.

I listen. Aye, I hear them, nearly! Nay, and do not  
you?"

"I b'lieve I do hear suthin'," he replied, "down in the  
bogs;

An' mebbe it is fairies, but mos' likely it is hogs."

## POET AND PEASANT

"See! See!" I cried. "The streaming splendor streak-  
ing o'er the sky,  
Where chariots of cloud on starry wheels are rolling  
by.  
See the auroral beams that stream from zenith to the  
sea,  
Where dies away the twilight gray and Night reigns  
full and free.  
The yellow moonlight's misty glow gilds all the scene  
around,  
Her jeweled rays fall now ablaze the hills—the Night  
is crowned  
With her own queenly diadem; the bright, auroral  
light  
Is Splendor's gorgeous setting for the sable cloak of  
Night.  
In thy mind's eye canst not descry the picture as I  
call:  
The Queen of Night, the crown of light, the sable  
cloak, and all?"

The night's own splendor dazzled him. His sleepy eye  
he rolled.  
"Doggone them sun dogs!" then he said. "They're  
alwus bringin' cold!"

## A PLAINSMAN'S PHILOSOPHY

WHEN it gits to comin' easy; when it's framed up all  
your way,  
When you've got 'em all a-comin' with th' dollars out  
to pay;  
It jist seems as though you couldn't get in badwise if  
you tried,  
An' th' ain't no game a-goin' but you're right on th'  
inside;  
When it gits t' comin' easy, everybody sort o' seems  
T' be anxious for t' help you keep on dreamin' pretty  
dreams,  
It's when things gits comin' easy that y' travel right  
along,  
But, say! Ain't it h—— t' stop 'em when things git t'  
goin' wrong!

I been punchin' long-horn cattle nigh on more'n twenty  
years.  
I know all about their notions, an' I've l'arned their  
likes an' fears;  
An' they're jist like things that happen in th' lives of  
you an' me,  
When they git t' drivin' gentle, they're as gentle as  
kin be.

## A PLAINSMAN'S PHILOSOPHY

They jist go as smooth as kin be, not th' swishin' of  
a tail,  
Not th' battin' of an eyebrow as they foller on th' trail,  
An' you hardly need t' watch 'em, 'cause they travel  
right along,  
But, say! Ain't it h—— t' stop 'em when they git t'  
goin' wrong!

I know how it is, ol' feller—I have been all through th'  
mill,  
I've enjoyed my share of trouble—I'm enjoyin' trouble  
still;  
I've seen sunny days an' cloudy. I've had sumchus fare  
an' plain,  
I've had beans and bread for dinner an' I may be there  
again;  
An' I've had things comin' easy, when it seemed t' be  
a sin  
Jist t' open up my tent flap an' t' let more sunshine in;  
When things git t' comin' easy, days an' nights go by  
like song,  
But, say! Ain't it h—— t' stop 'em when they git t'  
goin' wrong!

## UNDISMAYED

HE came up smilin'—used to say  
He made his fortune that-a-way;  
He had hard luck a-plenty, too,  
But settled down an' fought her through;  
An' every time he got a jolt  
He jist took on a tighter holt,  
Slipped back some when he tried to climb  
But came up smilin' every time.

He came up smilin'—used to git  
His share o' knocks, but he had grit,  
An' if they hurt he didn't set  
Around th' grocery store an' fret;  
He jist grabbed Fortune by th' hair  
An' hung on till he got his share,  
He had th' grit in him to stay  
An' come up smilin' every day.

## UNDISMAYED

He jist gripped hard an' all alone  
Like a set bull-pup with a bone,  
An' if he got shook loose, why then  
He got up an' grabbed holt again;  
He didn't have no time, he'd say,  
To bother about yesterday,  
An' when there was a prize to win  
He came up smilin' an' pitched in.

He came up smilin'—good fer him!  
He had th' grit an' pluck an' vim,  
So he's on Easy Street, an' durned  
If I don't think his luck is earned!  
No matter if he lost sometimes,  
He's got th' stuff in him that climbs,  
An' when his chance was mighty slim,  
He came up smilin'—good fer him!

## THE FRONTIERMAN

Remembered to come when all the country was a buffer  
wall.

When men was men an' went their way, without the  
aid of church or jail:

When law was our work in trade, an' stealin' 'em  
was capital.

An' law-abidin' was clear: o' trees an' trees served  
justice mighty well;

I reckoned when we could ride a hundred miles an'  
never see

A ranchman's shack—jist grass an' sage an' buffer  
trails, an' you an' me

Was all th' company we had, an' you would laugh out  
loud an' clear

An' then observe how sad it was we suffered so on th'  
Frontier!

I rickollee' one day in Fall—jist airly Fall, afore it's  
cold,

When all th' air was hazy blue an' all th' coulee leaves  
was gold;

We made our camp beside a crick, an' you brought in  
some venison

An' I had coffee soon a-bile, an' steak o' venison nigh  
done;

## THE FRONTIERSMAN

I rickollec' th' feast we had—with chips for plates an'  
twigs for spoons,  
An' jist a couple yards away th' crick was splashin'  
full o' tunes;  
An' say! Th' taste o' that one feed has been with me  
for many a year,  
An' you observed how sad to think we suffered so on  
th' Frontier!

I rickollec' how night come on—jist creepin' on us  
through th' grass,  
Jist droppin' on us from th' sky, as still as Injun prow-  
lers pass;  
An' then th' stars come twinklin' out, an' how th' Dip-  
per shone as bright  
As di'monds on a velvet cloth, an' all was still an' peace  
an' night.  
An' we rolled up in blankets there beside th' crick, an'  
laid there curled  
In sleep so sweet we didn't have a single care in all th'  
world.  
An' jist before you fell asleep, I heard you whisper in  
my ear:  
"Say, Prairie, ain't it h—— th' way we suffer out on  
th' Frontier!"



## THE FRONTIERSMAN

I rickollec' when mornin' come, th' dew that twinkled  
in th' grass,  
Th' bacon an' th' coffee smell, with plainsman's appetite for sass;  
Th' splash o' water on our cheeks down at th' crick;  
th' hosses led  
Down there t' drink, an' all our world was wide awake  
an' out o' bed.  
Th' air was jist like smellin' salts, an' when a feller  
threwed his chest  
Right out an' filled his lungs—well say! he knowed th'  
kind o' life that's best;  
An' laugh! Why, laughin' seemed t' be th' only sound  
we orto hear;  
How we old Plainsmen suffered in them days upon th'  
old Frontier!

## THE REFORMED

I jist heered that Elder Gray  
Give his money all away!  
Been a miser, clost an' hard  
Sence th' big tree in our yard  
Wuz a saplin'—never went  
Nigh a soul or give a cent!  
Heered las' night he give his wife  
All he saved up all his life!

Sounds onreal, but 'taint no lie—  
I jist seen th' hearse go by!

I jist heered that Jimmy Green  
Quit his drinkin'—cut it clean!  
Been a sot sence Jones's barn  
Wuz a woodshed—couldn't 'arn  
Half his salt an' starved his wife  
All her hopeless married life.  
Heered las' night, he got th' grit  
Someway in his soul t' quit!

Sounds onreal, but 'taint no lie—  
I jist seen th' hearse go by!

## THE REFORMED

I jist heered that Liddy Wall  
Quit her scoldin', good an' all!  
Heered her husband's restin' well  
Fust time in a right smart spell!  
Liddy allus used t' say  
She'd quit scoldin' him some day,  
But she never quite could git  
Made up in her mind t' quit!

Sounds onreal, but 'taint no lie—  
I jist seen th' hearse go by!

I jist heered that Abner Sykes  
Found a place he rilly likes.  
Abner moved about until  
Nothin' seemed to fill th' bill!  
Everywheres he went to yet  
Wuz too dry or else too wet,  
Too much drought or too much dew,  
But his movin' days is through!

Sounds onreal, but 'taint no lie—  
I jist seen the hearse go by!

## IF HE ONLY HAD A MIND

You've seen him—'course you have—the man who  
might have been so great,  
If he'd had the inclination and could only struck his  
gait;  
Who's afeared to work in summer when the temper'-  
ture is riz,  
And who can't work in the winter, 'cause he's got the  
rheumatiz;  
Who goes through life complainin', 'cause the good  
things pass him by,  
An' a-tellin' what he could do, if he'd only half way  
try;  
The man that in the race of life is joggin' 'way be-  
hind,  
But who might 'a' led the winners, if he'd only had a  
mind.

When I hear a feller tellin' 'bout the great things he  
could do,  
If he felt like, allus makes me think of our old Bobby  
Blue;  
A great, big, strappin' feller, but at workin' he was  
slack,  
'Cause he had a sunstroke once and was afeared he'd  
bring it back.

IF HE ONLY HAD A MIND

But Lor! I guess there's nothin' that was ever yet to  
do,  
But Bobby could 'a' done it, if he'd really wanted to.  
You'd have to scour the universe with fine toothed  
combs to find  
'A man to beat him workin'—if he'd only had a mind.

I've seen him sittin' evenin's on an old three-legged  
chair,  
His pants all rags and patches and with both his el-  
bows bare,  
A-scrapin' an old fiddle till he'd allus weary us,  
Screw up the pegs, an' cross his legs, an' look mys-  
terious,  
Then, winkin' confidential like, he'd say: "Don't say  
a word,  
But I got the greatest idee that you ever seen or heard.  
It's for a patent right; you boys jest keep still and  
you'll find  
I kin make it worth a million—if I only got a mind."

Again I've seen him sittin', with the people passin' by,  
A-chewin' cheap tobacco and a-spittin' at a fly;  
And he'd point out the rich merchant that he might  
'a' had as clerk,  
'And the house he might 'a' lived in, if he'd had a mind  
to work;

## IF HE ONLY HAD A MIND

And the girls he might 'a' married, if he'd had a mind  
to try;  
And the teams he might 'a' driven, that went swif'ly  
steppin' by;  
And the gems he might 'a' sparkled, and the way he  
might 'a' shined,  
With an independent fortune—if he'd only had a mind.

One night we went together to th' op'ry-house to hear  
A way-up concert company that was goin' to appear,  
They had the finest fiddler there that ever tuned a  
string,  
An' the noises that he imitated jest beat everything.  
At first he had us laughin', an' next time he made us  
cry,  
An' he played bird songs so life-like you could almost  
see 'em fly;  
An' Bobby sit and yawned and blinked, and finally  
opined  
He could beat him all to thunder—if he only had a  
mind.

Th' last time I saw Bobby he was purty nigh the end,  
A-suff'rin' from the fever an' he didn't seem to mend.  
The doctor gave him pills and things, but didn't do  
no good.  
He said he'd never get well and old Bobby swore he  
would.

## IF HE ONLY HAD A MIND

Doc was a-feelin' of his pulse—'twas beatin' mighty  
slow,

Says he: "It's only forty, and that's runnin' mighty  
low."

An' Bobby says, says he: "It may be runnin' 'way  
behind,

But I could run her up to ninety—if I only had a mind."

I can see him standin', peerin' at the gates of Paradise,  
With a sort o' leerin', sneerin'-like expression in his  
eyes.

I can see him sizin' up the gate, an' then I see him feel  
The gold an' pearly trimmin's and a-wonderin' if they-  
're real;

I can see him steppin' through an' takin' in the sights  
inside;

I can hear him tellin' Peter what *he* could do if he tried;  
An' his drawlin' voice a-sayin' that, while things was  
mighty fine,

He could build a blame sight better—if he only had a  
mind.

## FAMILY RESEMBLANCES

"He sort o' favors the Sykeses,"  
Says Ma, lookin' closely at me,  
An' she looks up at Pa as if layin' th' law  
An' a-waitin' fer him to agree.  
(The Sykeses, you know, was Ma's people.)  
"Jes' see that small mouth an' small chin,  
I don't want to brag but he's jes' his Aunt Mag  
I tell ye, right over agin."

"Walks jes' like his Uncle Cornelius!"  
( "He couldn't walk straight if he tried,  
An' I had him to bail 'leven times out o' jail,"  
Says Pa, in a sorter aside.)  
"Swings along jes' like him," Ma says, smilin'.  
( "He orter have swung!" Pa mos' chokes,  
Fer it always makes him jes' a-bilin'  
When Ma claims I favor her folks.)



## FAMILY RESEMBLANCES

"Got the reg'lar Sykes disposition."

(An' a devil's own temper it is,"

Says Pa down beneath his breath, grittin' his teeth,

And his dander beginnin' to sizz.)

"An' his hair, well, it's jes' like Aunt Sary's,

Thet married Lige Jenks from the Mills,

An' his nose is the picter o' Mary's,

An' his brow is th' image o' Will's."

"An' his voice, he gits that from th' Joneses,

They're cousins, you know, down in Kent;

An' I guess it mus' be from his Aunt Cicely

That he's gittin' his musical bent!"

An' Pa, well, he gits mad as thunder

An' swears like a pirate at sea,

An' says: "Thank the Lord that he's gittin' his board

And his clothes and his lodgin' from me!"

## A REMINISCENCE OF THE LONE PINE TRAIL

DEAD o' th' night an' th' moon rose pale  
As th' face o' th' man we led along,  
Over the hills th' long-drawn wail  
Of a coyote-cry, like a funeral song.

Never a man of us spoke a word  
As we tramped th' trail t' th' Lone Pine tree,  
But a wind rose out o' th' dark an' stirred  
Th' grass o' th' prairies mournfully.

Mile an' a half fr'm th' ol' log jail  
T' th' Lone Pine tree at th' Devils Bend,  
But a man don't speed on his final trail,  
With a tree an' a rope at th' other end.

Two in front as we lef' th' jail,  
Two behind an' two at th' side;  
Then forward march f'r th' Lone Pine trail  
Th' last this side o' th' Great Divide.

He walks along an' he knows th' plan,  
An' seems resigned as a man can be;  
F'r a life's a life, an' a man's a man.  
A rope's a rope an' a tree's a tree.

## A REMINISCENCE OF THE LONE PINE TRAIL

Give him a plenty o' room t' walk,  
Don' hurry a man on his final track;  
Plenty o' time if he wants t' talk,—  
F'r he stays thar when th' rest come back.

Stan' back, an' give him a chance t' pray,  
He needs God's help in th' by an' by;  
F'r a man will sin an' a man mus' pay,  
But a man can't do no more'n die.

Grit yer teeth f'r th' struggle, Pard,  
We'll make it quick as it can be made.  
Down, down on th' other end thar! *Hard!*  
A man has sinned an' a man has paid!

Th' hills are grim an' th' mornin's gray,  
Thar's somethin' thar 'twixt th' sod an' sky.  
A man will sin an' a man mus' pay,  
But a man can't do no more'n die!

## THE RURAL PSALMIST

ONE day Abner Wilcox brung  
In some taters an' he sung  
Psa'ms o' praise an' dropped 'em in  
Ezry Begg's tater bin.

"Life," so Abner Wilcox sings,  
"Is made up o' little things,  
An' too many folks pass by  
Them with an unseein' eye!"

An' when Ezry went t' git  
Taters out fer Widder Britt  
He said Abner's song, he knew  
Every word was gospel true!

Abner used t' set a while  
On th' counter an' he'd smile  
In his honest, open way,  
Look at Ez an' then he'd say:  
"Ain't no tellin', is there Ez,  
What a day'll bring?" he says.  
"An'," says he, "don't let's repine,  
Let's be fixed fer rain or shine."

## THE RURAL PSALMIST

An' when Ezry went t' look  
Fer his umbersol Ab took,  
He said he madë up his mind  
Ab wuz fixed for either kind!

Abner allus used t' weigh  
In some hefty stuff with hay  
Out on Ezry's scales t' make  
Up fer some that's bound t' shake  
Out a-comin' down th' road,  
An' when Ezry weighed th' load  
Abner says: "How folks we've known  
Asts fer bread an' gits a stone!"

An' when Ab druv off, why Ez  
Seen th' stone and so he says:  
"Seems like some folks in our day  
Gits a stone that asts fer hay!"

## ON MODERN MUSIC

SHE's been to masters French and Greek, Italian and  
Dutch,  
She 's put in years on technique and she's put in years  
on touch,  
She 's long on Dago music, she knows all the rhapso-  
dies,  
She 's got a pile o' nocturnes like a haystack, if y'  
please;  
She simply dotes on Vogner; he 's the daddy of 'em  
all,  
To hear her rave about him when th' women come t'  
call.  
But with all her fuss an' notions, sir, I wouldn't give  
a prune  
T' hear her play—she don't know how to play one gol-  
durned tune!

She sits down at th' bench an' draws a mighty, innard  
breath,  
Then slams both hands down this way—like t' scare a  
man t' death!  
That's the prelude, so she tells me; then it's too-dle-  
oodle-oo,  
Tweedle, tweedle, toodle, toodle, rattle, tittle, tattle,  
too!  
Then she climbs up in the treble and she teeters on th'  
keys,  
Like a bird upon a limb when heavy winds is in th'  
trees!

## ON MODERN MUSIC

Down she slides into the bass part an' she hammers it  
like sin,  
While I sit there waitin', waitin' f'r th' music t' begin.

Purty soon she strikes up somethin' like an old, famil-  
iar air,  
Sort o' sweet an' full o' comfort, an' I tilt back in my  
chair,  
Feelin' glad th' noise is over an' th' music has begun,  
But she only plays a note or two an' then th' music 's  
done.

Bang! She strikes a bunch o' discords an' she races  
down th' course,  
One hand a-follerin' t'other like an old, string-halted  
horse;  
An' she murmurs: "Daddy, Daddy, ain't that harmony  
jist grand?  
Oh, Daddy, how it thrills you if you only understand!"

Now I got my own opinion of what music orto be,  
An' it ain't no bunch o' fingers teeterin' on a single key.  
It's got some order to it, an' y' hear it in y'r ears  
F'r days an' months, an' sometimes, if it's extry sweet,  
f'r years!

Y' kin gi' me Annie Laurie, played th' good, ol'-fash-  
ioned way—

Without no frills or furbelows—jes' sit down there an'  
play,

An' I don't ask nothin' sweeter; f'r me it's twict as  
grand

'As any furrin rhapsody I never understand!

## THE FORUM

Down to Hick's grocery store  
Tariff's all a settled score;  
Income tax is voted on,  
Deficit's all paid and gone,  
Naval program's all arranged,  
Immigration laws is changed,  
And we found, on settlin' these,  
Time to lick the Japanese.

But we can't agree at all  
Where to build the city hall!

Down to Hick's grocery store,  
Africa ain't dark no more,  
Hicks traced Teddy's route by rail  
With a dried salt herring's tail  
On a map, and Homer Pry  
Drawed us all a tsetse fly  
On a paper sack that Finn  
Bought some boneless codfish in.

But we ain't got figured out  
Who gets mail on our new route!



## THE FORUM

Down to Hick's grocery store,  
I allow we've settled more  
Burnin' questions in a night  
Than the courts—an' done it right.  
Hicks, he allus keeps in touch  
With the world's crowned heads an' such,  
An' there's very little goes  
On abroad but what he knows.

An' he says to Treadwell Pew :  
"Who'll I charge them herrings to?"

## THE VOLUNTEER

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek"—he allus used to  
say,  
An' stretch his arms out straight an yawn' in sech a  
lazy way;  
"If I was back at Tinker's Creek, I tell you what I'd  
do,  
I'd get a can of worms f'r bait and I'd be callin' you  
T' get your lines and bobbars out, an' we'd go down th'  
lane  
T' where a little footpath turns, down t'other side th'  
grain,  
An' winds a half-mile through th' woods, until a feller  
gets  
His nose jist full of blossom smells, an' mint an' vio-  
lets!"

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek"—a dozen times a day  
He'd look out sorter yearnin' like, in sech a dreamy  
way,  
As though he had 'em in his eyes, th' blossoms an' th'  
rain  
That used t' make th' flowers fresh an' drip all down th'  
lane.  
"If I was back at Tinker's Creek I tell you what I'd do,  
I'd sharpen up that scythe o' mine an' go a-slashin'  
through  
That clover jist beyond th' hedge, an' I'd jist sorter  
give  
A great big sigh o' thankfulness f'r bein' let to live."

## THE VOLUNTEER

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek"—sometimes he'd  
stop at mess

An' wipe his eyes an' sorter choke all up with lonesome-  
ness;

An' tell us where th' pasture was an' where th' old  
folks' house

Stood on a knoll, an' maybe he'd be drivin' up th' cows  
If he was there at milkin' time, an' then he'd sigh an'  
say:

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek, I'd take you right  
to-day

Out where them cider apples grow, an' shake th' big-  
gest tree

An' stand right there an' let 'em come a-droppin' over  
me."

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek," he says to me one  
day

When we were on th' firin' line, an' smiled that funny  
way;

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek," an' then he turned  
half 'round

An' staggered some an' dropped his gun and sat down  
on th' ground.

"I guess they've hit me pretty bad!" he whispered; an'  
he said:

"If I was back at Tinker's Creek, th' hedge would all  
be red

Jist like it is this time o' year, an' I'd be callin' you——"

An' then he closed his eyes—I guess that Tinker's  
Creek come true!

## PARTING WORDS

ABNER Wilcox brung some eggs  
In t' sell; an' Ezry Beggs  
Counts 'em out, an' Abner waits  
Fer his money, 'cuz he hates  
T' give credit; an' he says:  
"Good Lord keep ye, Brother Ez!  
It's a wicked world an' we  
Ain't jist what we orto be!"

An' nex' day, why, Ezry Beggs  
Says thet half of Abner's eggs  
Proves them partin' words of his  
Jist ez true ez Scripture is!

Abner Wilcox allus brung  
Some good sayin' on his tongue  
'Bout th' wickedness of sin  
When he brung his butter in.  
Set his crock right down an' say:  
"Good Lord guard ye on yer way,  
Brother Ez—life's jist a span,  
Let's be decent ez we can!"

Ezry says it wuz a sin  
(When he put his tryer in)  
Abner's butter hadn't heard  
Brother Abner's partin' word!

## PARTING WORDS

Abner brung some broilers, all  
Dressed along in early fall,  
An' got top-notch price becuz  
Of how scurce young chickens wuz.

"Years is passin', Ez," says he,  
"Gittin' older, you an' me,  
But we ain't real old ez long  
Ez th' heart is full of song!"

An' nex' day, why, Ezra, he  
Told it t' Hod Griggs an' me:  
"Too bad," Ezry says, "by jing,  
Abner's broilers couldn't sing!"

## SOMETHING ABOUT SUNDAY

THERE is somethin' about Sunday—what it is I can't  
jest say,  
But somehow it's allus sweeter than most any other  
day;  
I don't know no special reason, unless possibly it be  
Thet th' Lord takes special pains to make it so, espe-  
cially.  
Ain't no longer hours, I reckon, but it allus seems as  
though  
They was fuller of real sweetness an' I hate to see 'em  
go,  
An' I know the' ain't no difference, but it allus seems,  
I say,  
There is somethin' about Sunday sweeter 'n any other  
day.

Somethin' about Sunday—I can't tell jest what it is,  
But it's sort o' dedicated to all goodness 'cause it's His.  
I ain't much on creeds an' docterns, but my Mother,  
years ago  
Taught me somethin' about Sunday thet was good for  
me t' know.  
Said if I jest did on Sunday what my conscience let  
me do  
Without smartin' jest a little, an' I'd pass th' whole day  
through  
Without doin' harm or thinkin' it, I'd allus find, some-  
way,  
There was somethin' about Sunday not like any other  
day.

## SOMETHING ABOUT SUNDAY

Somethin' about Sunday, when th' ain't no race for  
pelf,  
Or fer this thing or fer that thing, sorter brings me to  
myself;  
Sorter links me up with Nature, with th' flowers an'  
fresh air,  
Sorter proves there's lots o' goodness in th' world most  
anywhere  
If you only go an' seek it; an' th' best there is in me  
Comes a-bubblin' to th' surface; an' the days thet I  
keep free  
From a-doin' harm or thinkin' it to anybody show  
There is somethin' about Sunday—but you've got t'  
make it so!

An' I don't want nothin' narrer an' I don't want nothin'  
small  
About orderin' of Sunday—it belongs t' me an' all  
Of the world an' all I ask 'em it t' try th' better plan  
Of not doin' harm or thinkin'—an' what little good we  
can.  
Why, it jewels every minute with a gladness you don't  
know,  
An' it makes you love th' hours an' you hate t' see  
'em go;  
'Cause my mother used t' tell me in th' good old-fash-  
ioned way,  
There is somethin' about Sunday thet we need on every  
day!

## OLD FRIENDS

10 A. M.

"WELL! Well! Good mornin'! Howdy do!  
I never dreamed o' seein' you.  
Jes' come back, huh? Been away  
Since 'way las' June—or was it May?  
Glad to see you? Well, I swan  
I missed ye since y' hev been gone!  
Huh? Well, I don' min' if I do.  
I don' care, seein' how it's you.

10:15 O'CLOCK

"Well! Well! It does me good t' see  
Y' back again! Hev one with me.  
Yep. Fillemp up again, ol' fel'.  
Goin' t' stay, too? Well, well, well!  
I'm glad t' hear it. Make a strike?  
Ten thousand, huh? That's somethin' like!  
Le's see—how long y' been away  
Since 'way las' June—or was it May?

10:30 O'CLOCK

"Le's see—how long y' been away?  
Since 'way las' June—or was it May?  
Well, shay, ol' chap, come up to tea  
Tomorrow mornin'; you an' me,  
We're glad to shee each ozzer—hey?  
I'm glad t' hear ye're goin' t' shtay,  
Le's see—longsh y' been away?  
Was it nex' June or 'way las' May?



## OLD FRIENDS

11 O'CLOCK

"Come on, le's have annuzzer. Shay,  
How longsh shay y' been away?  
Le's see—y' left th' town nex' May,  
Or las' June? An' ye're goin' t' shtay?  
Shay! Le's go home. M' wife, she'll be  
Awful gladsh shee you an' me.  
Le's see—how long y' been away?  
Since 'way nex' June—or wash't May?

NOON

"Si' down, si' down! Shay! Did y' shay  
How longsh wash y' been away?  
Wash't nex' June or wash't May?  
We're glad t' shee each ozzer—hey?  
Shay! Never min', now! Thash all right,  
We'll have breakfas' togezzer t'night,  
An' supper t'morrer mornin'. Shay!  
How longsh shay y' been away?"

## THE UNREST OF KNOWLEDGE

Hod Griggs said he heered, in a couple of years,  
    (An' it made him grow skeery an' pale!)  
The's a comet 'll pass nigh th' earth, an' he hears  
    It's got six billion miles to its tail!  
An' ef it sh'd slip er sh'd git off it's track  
    By a few million miles, er a piece  
Of th' tail sh'd swing over an' fetch us a whack  
    It'd melt us all up inter grease!

An' Elmer Dow said he was thinkin' of how  
He 'ud patch up his barn roof, but said he'd allow  
Ef she's all goin 't melt, ez Hod Griggs says he hears,  
The old one'll do fer a couple o' years!

Hod Griggs said he read, but he don't know jest where,  
    That th' land is a-settlin' each day,  
An' it ain't very long till th' sea 'll be there,  
    An' wash all th' people away.  
Some scientist proved it beyond any doubt,  
    Hod read th' perdition he wrote,  
An' he won't be s'prised any day to look out  
    An' see half of his henhouse afloat.

## THE UNREST OF KNOWLEDGE

An' Elmer Dow said he was thinkin' of how  
He 'ud rebuild his smokehouse, but said he'd allow  
Ef conditions is bad as Hod Griggs said he hears,  
Th' old one 'll do fer a couple of years.

Hod Griggs said he read that th' sun's gettin' cold,  
An' it ain't at all strange that it should,  
When y' think how it must be a million years old,  
An' some day she'll go out fer good.  
Hod noticed last winter she wasn't ez hot  
Ez she was mebbe ten years ago,  
An' it's plain to be seen that th' summers is not  
Nigh ez warm ez we all used t' know.

An' Elmer Dow said that so much knowledge brings  
Jest a dreadful onrest, an' th' natur' o' things  
Is so mortal oncertain, he can't even tell  
Ef it's goin' t' pay t' put curb in his well.

## CROSSING THE DIVIDE

PARSON, I'm a maverick, just runnin' loose an' grazin',  
Eatin' where's th' greenest grass an' drinkin' where  
I choose,

Had to rustle in my youth an' never had no raisin',  
Wasn't never halter broke, an' I ain't much to lose.  
Used to sleepin' in a bag an' lyin' in a slicker.

Church folks never branded me—I don't know as  
they tried;  
Wish you'd say a prayer for me an' try to make a  
dicker,  
For the best they'll give me when I cross the Big  
Divide.

Tell 'em I ain't been corralled a night in more 'n  
twenty,

Tell 'em I'm rawboned an' rough an' I ain't much  
for looks;

Tell 'em I don't need much grief becauce I've had a  
plenty.

I don't know how bad I am 'cause I ain't kept no  
books.

Tell 'em I'm a maverick a-runnin' loose unbranded,  
Tell 'em I shoot straight an' quick an' ain't got  
much to hide;

Have 'em come an' size me up as soon as I get landed,  
I just want my needin's when I cross the Big Di-  
vide.

## CROSSING THE DIVIDE

Tell 'em I rode straight an' square an' never grabbed  
for leather,

Never roped a crippled steer or rode a sore-backed  
horse,

Tell 'em I've bucked wind an' rain an' every sort of  
weather,

Had my tilts with Al. K. Hall an' Captain R. E. Morse.  
Don't hide nothin' from 'em whether it be sweet or  
bitter,

Tell 'em I'll stay on the range, but if I'm shut out-  
side

I'll abide it like a man, because I ain't no quitter,

I ain't going to change just when I cross the Big  
Divide.

Tell 'em when th' Roundup comes for all us human  
critters

Just corral me with my kind an' run a brand on me;  
I don't want to be corralled with hypocrites an' quit-  
ters,

Brand me just for what I am—an' I'm just what  
you see.

I don't want no steam-het stall, or bran-mash for my  
ration,

I just want to meet th' Boss an' face him honest-  
eyed,

Show him just what chips I got an' shove 'em in for  
cashin',

That's what you can tell 'em when I cross the Big  
Divide.

## SENTENCED

"WHAT ye up fer?" Squire, says he;  
"Matrimony," says Hank Lee,  
Blushin' red ez he c'd be.

"Stand up closter!" Squire, says he;  
"Jine hands tight, an' look at me!  
Sary Wilkins, what's yer plea?"

"Speak up louder!" Squire, saye he.  
"Life imprisonment 'll be  
Sentence passed on both o' ye."

"At hard labor!" Squire says he;  
"Bailiff, let th' prisoners be  
Held, awaitin' shivvaree!"

"An' ten dollars," Squire, says he,  
"Fer th' court that sentenced ye.  
Next offender! Who'll it be?"

## UNTRIED

ELMER Hodges 'lowed that he's  
Tried a thousand remedies  
For his indigestion; said  
He 'ud 'bout ez leave be dead  
Ez t' be a wreck an' be  
Allus crippled up like he  
Is becuz his stummick jest  
Acts th' very orn'riest.

Elmer said he's set around  
Twenty years an' he ain't found  
Any blessed comfort yet  
Any way he tries t' set.  
An th' medicines he's took  
Outen Hot Brigg's' doctor book  
Cost him nigh enough an' more  
T' buy Ezry Pembroke's store.

An' then Ezry told him, dry,  
'Bout one thing he'd orto try  
Which cured more complaints, he guessed,  
In its time than all th' rest.  
"What's that, Ezry?" Elmer says.  
"Jest a little work," says Ez,  
Winkin' at us, dry an' odd.  
An' Jess Blair, he jest haw-hawed!

## DISCONTINUED

COMES an Inspector to Ford-o'-th'-Creek,  
Gover'ment feller, so dapper an' slick;  
Chuck full o' system an' wantin' t' know  
If th' Post Office was runnin' jesso.  
Feller, ex-cow hand, called Bowlegged Nick,  
Was th' Postmaster at Ford-o'-th'-Creek;  
Didn't much want it, but used t' share bed  
Out on th' Round-up one Summer with Ted.

Wasn't much system at Ford-o'-th'-Creek,  
Nick used t' do th' distributin' trick:  
Unlock th' mail pouch an' turn up th' sack,  
Fill up a soap box with mail an' go back  
Whar th' boys was in th' Class Double A,  
(Name of a Joy Joint just over th' way.)  
An' thar th' soap box stood out on th' shelf,  
Mail to yer order by helpin' yerself.

Simple as could be, without any fuss,  
Quite satisfact'ry to each one of us.  
Wasn't no trouble an' made no delay,  
Post Office open by night or by day.  
Honestest system that ever was known,  
Fish in th' soap box an' pick out yer own,  
Never no red tape, no keys or no locks,  
Just had a sort o' community box.



## DISCONTINUED

Comes an Inspector to Ford-o'-th'-Creek,  
Roars on our system an' goes huntin' Nick;  
Reads him th' Rulebook one hull afternoon,  
Kicks on th' soap box an' raves like a loon;  
Hollers his head off an' talks about jail  
Fer such a way of distributin' mail:  
"Haf t' get rid of that soap box, an' quick!"  
Says th' Inspector at Ford-o'-th'-Creek.

Nick takes th' soap box to th' bank o' th' Creek,  
Sets it down, runs back, an' hits it a kick.  
"How's that," says Nick, an' th' feller turns pale,  
"How's that," says Nick, "fer distributin' mail?"  
"Wire th' Department," says Nick, "that y' find  
Bowlegged Nick, th' Postmaster's, resigned!  
Wire th' Department, an' do it durn quick:  
Post Office closed here at Ford-o'-th'-Creek!"

## UNREST

Th' feller thet lives in th' country  
Gits dreamin' an' hears  
Th' city's glad music come swellin'  
So sweet to his ears  
Th' woods ain't th' same an' th' blossoms  
Thet he loved so long,  
As if some worm-canker was eatin'  
Th' heart of th' song.

Th' feller thet lives in th' country  
Gits dreamin' an' sees  
Th' city's glad columns go marchin'  
As gay as y' please;  
Till furrers is long-turned an' lonesome  
When twilight gits gray,  
An' somethin' like canker is blightin'  
Th' heart of th' day.

## UNREST

Th' feller thet lives in th' city  
Gits dreamin' an' hears  
Th' country's soft choruses murmur  
So sweet in his ears  
Th' streets ain't th' same an' th' towers  
Thet he knew so long,  
An' somethin' like sorrow is eatin'  
Th' heart of th' song.

Th' feller thet lives in th' city  
Gits dreamin' an' sees  
Green hills where th' cattle are browsin'  
An' all through th' trees  
Deep shadders so cool an' refreshin'  
With squirrels at play,  
An' somethin' like longin' is blightin'  
Th' heart of his day.

## HEREDITARY

FELLER makes his money an' he works his way through  
school,  
Chooses his perfession or his business, as a rule;  
Picks out his own sweetheart, as he gits along in life,  
Follows his own notions when he marries him a wife;  
Chooses his abidin' place, whatever state he please,  
Uses his own judgment in all matters such as these,  
But I've allus noticed in my travelin's aroun',  
Feller gits religion an' his party handed down!

Don' know why it should be, but it's nearly allus so,  
Methodists from Methodists 'most everywhere you go;  
Baptists keep on Baptists, as their ancestors before,  
People seekin' Heaven in th' faith their parents bore;  
Doctors come from farmers—ain't no rule to govern  
that,  
(Never git Republican from some old Democrat!)  
Democrats from Democrats, 'most all th' way aroun',  
We all git religion an' our party handed down!

Still, I ain't a-kickin—I'm Republican am I,  
Church-ways I'm Episcopal!—don't know exactly  
why;  
Got it from my parents who inherited of it,  
An' I haven't ever worried much about th' fit.  
Got so much to think about of things I really need,  
Saved a lot of trouble when they picked me out a  
creed.  
Might been Prohibitionist, if lef' t' choose aroun',  
Glad I had religion an' my party handed down!

## DAYS OF CHEER

"FEELIN' fine," he used t' say,  
Come a clear or cloudy day;  
Wave his hand, an' shed a smile,  
Keepin' sunny all th' while;  
Never let no bug-bears grim  
Git a wrastle-holt o' him;  
Kep' a-smilin' rain or shine,  
Tell you he was "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine," he used t' say,  
Wave his hand an' go his way;  
Never had no time t' lose  
So he said, in fighting blues;  
Had a twinkle in his eye  
Always when a-goin' by,  
Sort o' smile up into mine,  
Tell me he was "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine," he'd allus say,  
An' th' sunshine seemed t' stay  
Close by him, or else he shone  
With some sunshine of his own;  
Didn't seem no clouds could dim  
Any happiness for him,  
Allus seemed to have a line  
Out f'r gladness—"feelin' fine!"

## DAYS OF CHEER

"Feelin' fine," I've heered him say  
Half a dozen times a day,  
An' as many times I knowed  
He was bearin' up a load,  
But he never let no grim  
Troubles git much holt on him,  
Kep' his spirits jest like wine,  
Bubblin' up an' "feelin' fine!"

"Feelin' fine"—I hope he'll stay  
All his three score that-a-way,  
Lettin' his demeanor be  
Sech as you could have or me  
Ef we tried, an' went along  
Spillin' little drops o' song,  
Lettin' rosebuds sort o' twine  
O'er th' thorns an' "feelin' fine."

## ACHIEVEMENT

I DUNNO—I may be foolish, but it allus seems to me  
Thet our dreams is jest like childurn, sech as you  
might have er me;

We kin look back there an' see 'em ez they used t' be  
in youth,

When we thought life was all pleasure an' the speech  
o' men all truth;

We kin look back an' remember how they made us  
glad all day,

When they jest walked hand in hand with us, afore  
they went away,

They was allus bright ez sunshine an' ez light an' fine  
ez foam,

An' then they growed up an' left us—jest like childurn  
leavin' home.

Once th' house was peopled with 'em, an' they played  
like childurn play,

Inter every nook an' cranny, never restin' all th' day;

Once we heered 'em allus laughin' jest like childurn  
laugh fer you,

An' a-talkin' of tomorrer, jest th' same as childurn do.

Once no day was bright without 'em, an' they gathered  
in th' light

Of th' grate an' smiled about us jest like childurn do  
at night;

An' they went back to Dreamland, an' they left us in  
th' gloam

Of our life alone and lonesome—jest like childurn  
leavin' home.

## ACHIEVEMENT

Why, it ain't so long, I reckon, leastwise that's th' way  
it seems,  
Sence I was th' happy daddy of a family o' dreams;  
When they clustered all about me an' they climbed up  
in my chair,  
An' they smiled at me an' greeted me from almost  
everywhere;  
Every night I heered 'em singin'—I could hear 'em  
jest ez plain!  
An' they used t' dance before me all th' way along th'  
lane;  
How they kept me sweet an' hopeful on what rough  
road I might roam,  
But they've all growed up an' left me, jest like chil-  
durn leavin' home.

An' sometimes I set at evenin' where I used t' see 'em  
play,  
Sort o' solemn like an' lonesome, sence they're growed  
an' gone away;  
Sort o' glad I used t' have 'em, when I git t' dreamin'  
on,  
'Bout ez glad I used t' have 'em ez I'm sorry that  
they're gone.  
How I used t' set a-dreamin' in this big old-fashioned  
chair,  
With th' dreams like childurn playin' in my castles in  
th' air.  
They was colored jest like rainbows an ez light an'  
fine ez foam,  
But they've all growed up an' left me—jest like chil-  
durn leavin' home.



## THE ORIGIN OF THE JOKER

SANDY had no tinge of ochre, and he played his hand  
at poker well supported by the joker in the belt  
about his waist;

Not his custom 'twas to bicker unless oversteeped in  
liquor, but no man was ever quicker on the  
trigger, and his haste

It was written plainly, very, in the frontier cemetery,  
where the custom 'twas to bury those who dal-  
lied with the wine;

Subsequently to be ruing when some argument was  
brewing, and thereafter something doing in the  
undertaking line.

Now, upon the day I'm naming, Sandy sat there fiercely  
gaming, and quite frequently inflaming his men-  
tality with stuff

Drawn from out a sombre bottle by a gentleman named  
Wattel, who presided that the throttle of the  
bar at Devil's Bluff.

And while Wattel was infusing drink, poor Sandy's  
cash kept oozing from the hoard that he was  
losing to a kindred spirit, known

Far and wide as Bill-the-Soaker (title given by some  
joker), who was very fond of poker and was  
always dry as bone.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE JOKER

Be it evermore a warning to the graceless soul's adorn-  
ing that the resurrection morning draweth near  
for him, who, bold,

Seeks by sinful ways and handy in a poker game to  
bandy with a wicked man like Sandy when the  
deck is passing cold.

For, when Sandy having aces full on jacks, laid down  
ten cases there was wonder on the faces of the  
watchers, who looked grim

When the thoughtless William, staying, laid down aces  
four, and saying: "You can't beat it," went to  
weighing what the pot would profit him.

Now, no deck upon earth's face is graced with quite  
so many aces since there are no fitting places  
for the number, and the brand

Of unfairness in his poker being placed on Bill-the-  
Soaker, Sandy drew—and drew his "joker,"  
seeking thus to fill his hand;

Drew and held it, muzzle aiming straight at William,  
and, proclaiming what he held, declared the  
gaming at an end, and, raking in,

Said three aces and a joker were a winning hand at  
poker, whereat William (called the Soaker)  
acquiesced the hand would win.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE JOKER

It was in the rough and gory days that saw the Frontier's glory, and 'twas thus, so runs the story,  
that the joker came to be

Introduced to Hoyle's attention by a plainsman's  
shrewd invention of a means to beat four aces  
when himself he held up three.

And the well-known master crafter said in every pack  
thereafter must be one card, named for Laugh-  
ter, and be kept there evermore,

Kept there in commemoration of shrewd Sandy's dec-  
laration, that a quick draw and three aces made  
a better hand than four.

## THE TAXEATERS

"VILLAGE taxes is too high,"  
Hi Griggs says, an' sets up nigh  
Ezry's cider on a bench,  
An' he takes a glass t' squench  
Of his thirst an' never says  
Pay er by-ye-leave to Ez.  
An' then Ezry tells us dry  
"Tax on cider's special high,  
Jist when Hi Griggs sets up nigh!"

Hi Griggs says that one tax leads  
To another an' says greed's  
Gittin' holt of th' trustees,  
An' he hunts around an' sees  
Where th' split salt herrin' is  
Jist as if th' store was his.  
An' then Ezry speaks up dry:  
"Tax on herrin' follers nigh  
Onto cider—don't it Hi?"

Hi Griggs says there's no excuse  
Fer them folks as don't perduce  
But thet jist consumes, an' he's  
Lookin' all th' time fer cheese.  
An' he's dry enough by then  
So's to take a drink again.  
Ezry says it beats the deuce  
How much them consumers use  
An' how seldom they perduce.

## AN ELEGY IN A COUNTRY PRINTSHOP

HE's taken "thirty" off the hook. It's quitting time for  
Slim.

We've closed the shop this afternoon to read the proof  
on him

And find it pretty middling clean, a pi line here and  
there,

But only such a one as apt to slip in anywhere.

His ticket's on the Foreman's desk, all figured up, I  
s'pose.

He had some fat takes and some lean, but that's the  
way it goes.

I don't know what's his overtime or what his check  
will be.

I guess he'll strike the average along with you and me.

He set a measure middling wide—he liked to set that  
way—

His work was mostly solid stuff and not much on  
display.

He should have lived threescore of years, a friend of  
yours and mine.

It's tough to think some worthless chap is quadding  
out his line.

He told me nigh a month ago, as cool as anything,  
His dupes were cut and pasted up, a middling longish  
string.

He said he never skinned the shop and guessed he'd  
had his share

Of overtime and double price, and maybe some to  
spare.

## AN ELEGY IN A COUNTRY PRINTSHOP

He set a proof that showed up clean and did his work  
up right.

He never shirked by day so he could double space at  
night.

The make-up's dumped his matter in. His form is  
closed, you see.

His galley's empty on the rack; his slug is twenty-  
three.

We don't know what the Cashier's desk will have to  
give to Slim.

We'll mark a turn rule in the proof and say a prayer  
for him.

For him the dawn is in the east, it's getting light up-  
town,

And "thirty" taken off the hook; the last form's going  
down!

## SOME POINTERS FROM GRUM

"Now I vum,"  
Said old Grum,  
"Y' sh'd keep gals t' hum  
Till they're twenty er thirty  
Ez tight ez a drum.

Y' sh'd l'arn  
'Em t' 'arn  
What they git an' consarn  
Themselves with th'r chores,  
That's my doctern, by darn!

An' th' boys  
Y' sh'd lick  
Every day with a stick,  
Till they come when y' call 'em  
An' come mighty quick!

Y' sh'd teach  
'Em that speech  
Is f'r grown folks an' sich;  
We got youngsters t' work,  
We got preachers t' preach.

## SOME POINTERS FROM GRUM

An' this dum  
Go an' come  
Is all nonsense, I vum.  
In all my born days  
Ain't been five mile fr'm hum.

Oh, I got  
Some idees  
How t' raise familees,  
How I'm goin' t' raise mine;  
You can do as y' please.

An' f'r clo'es,  
Do y' s'pose  
That my spondulix goes  
F'r Paris creations  
An' gowns an' silk hose?

Why, say!  
This old plum  
Colored suit here, I vum,  
I was married in that  
An' it's good now, by gum!

Oh, I got  
Some idees  
How t' raise familees.  
I was raised thataway  
An' by gum look at me!"



## THE PERFECT STAGE-ROBBER

Th' most perlitest robber, Pard, that ever flashed a  
gun  
On th' frontier trail to Deadwood, whar th' stages used  
to run.  
I was dozin' off an' dreamin' when th' driver hollered  
"Whoa!"  
An' I heered a clickin' trigger whar th' sagebrush  
used t' grow  
Higher'n Six-Foot Spencer's middle; in a most per-  
suadin' way  
He invited us t' linger while he passed th' time of day;  
He had one of Colt's persuaders, which jest mesmer-  
izes you  
When you look into it stiddy fer a minute's time er  
two!

Th' most perlitest robber, Pard, that ever robbed a  
stage  
On th' road, as I remember now, in this er any age;  
He was coverin' th' driver an' th' men of us, an' that  
Was th' reason, so he told us, that he didn't tip his hat  
To th' ladies of th' party, which th' same he couldn't  
chance;  
But his breedin' was remarkable—I seen that at a  
glance;  
Th' most perlitest robber, Pard, I ever, ever met.  
He was jest a perfect master of th' laws of etiquette!

## THE PERFECT STAGE-ROBBER

He smiled behind his weapon—good a smile as you  
could ask,

An' it run up on his face an' was lost behind his mask.  
Th' driver acted offish, so he shot him through th' arm,  
But apologized profoundly fer this necessary harm;  
An' he said, "Now, all in favor of preservin' life's few  
sands

Indicate th' inclination, please, by holdin' up your  
hands!"

Th' vote was all affirmative, as fur as I could see;  
An' he said, "I thank you, brethren, fer this una-  
nimity!"

I remember when I offered him my ticker he said,  
"I'm

A very, very busy man, but glad to take th' time!"  
We had a school ma'am with us an' a little, shy, trained  
nurse,

An' he said, "You're wearied, ladies—won't you let  
me take your purse?"

He looked so pained an' troubled when one feller  
stood, unpursed,

An' offered him his money, an' he murmured, "Ladies  
first!"

A rebuke quite unexpected, but it proves, where'er you  
go,

That natural perliteness and gentility will show!

## THE PERFECT STAGE-ROBBER

Th' most perlitest robber, Pard, I ever, ever met,  
A perfect an' past master of th' laws of etiquette!  
He took up his collection, an' he cut th' tugs an' spoke,  
"You see, I leave no traces!"—which was somethin'  
of a joke.

He bowed to both th' ladies an' perlutely backed away.  
"So fortunate a meeting! Such a profitable day!"  
He cried to us at partin'—"Be a pleasant journey  
thine!  
I'm very glad I met you, an' th' pleasure is all mine!"

## A CHRISTMAS GREETING

"MERRY Christmas!" Wishin' it  
Earnest; ain't no hypocrite.  
Got no sort o' axe to grind,  
Jes' feel sort o' so inclined.  
Heart so full o' happiness  
Wish 'et I c'd call an' bless  
Everyone, an' so I say:  
"Merry Christmas! Bless th' day!"

"Merry Christmas!" Sayin' it  
Honest like, an' heart t' fit.  
Wishin' everyone c'd share  
Happiness, an' some t' spare.  
Turkey smokin' hot an' brown,  
Old and young folks settin' roun',  
Holly twined with mistletoe,  
"Merry Christmas!" Jes' feel so!

"Merry Christmas!" Frosty air  
Echoin' it everywhere.  
"Merry Christmas!" That's what tells  
In th' chime o' th' church bells.  
"Merry Christmas!" Prose er rhyme  
Can't do justice to th' time,  
Can't find language t' express  
What it holds o' happiness.

## A CHRISTMAS GREETING

"Merry Christmas!" Want t' pray  
F'r 'em all jes' thataway.  
Ain't no highfalutin' prayer  
As I know of can compare  
With that simple wish o' mine:  
"Merry Christmas!"—snow er shine,  
Heart beats happy either way,  
"Merry Christmas!" Bless th' day.

"Merry Christmas!" Me an you  
An' th' whole world, through an' through.  
Ain't no language can express  
What it means o' happiness.  
"Merry Christmas!" Prose er rhyme  
Can't do justice to th' time.  
Jes' ain't nothin' else t' say:  
"Merry Christmas! Bless th' day!"

## THE MISTAKEN CUE

SCRIMP Short, th' banker, tells some stale ol' joke,  
An' Abner Watkins laughs nigh fit t' choke,  
An' Peleg Hawkins lets out a wild screech  
An' slaps his knees an' says: "Ain't that a peach!"  
Hod Griggs, th' grocer, hollers like his crow  
Is all choked up, an' Pike Botts says: "Haw, haw!  
Th' best I've heered in many a day, by jing!"  
An' holds his sides an' snorts like everything.

Kin almost tell from hearin' of 'em snort  
Which one has got th' biggest note with Short!

Scrimp Short says sich-an'-sich is so-an'-so,  
An' Abner Watkins drinks it in as though  
It's gospel from St. Luke; an' Peleg says  
"There's common sense to that, Hod Griggs, I guess!"  
An' Hod Griggs says: "I allus told you, Hawk,  
Scrimp Short could go t' Congress in a walk!"  
An' Pike Botts sets up in his cheer, an' he  
Jist looks at Scrimp, an' looks admirin'ly.

## THE MISTAKEN CUE

Kin almost tell from hearin' of 'em speak  
Which ones can't pay their interest next week!

An' one time when Scrimp Short was layin' law  
Down hard, Pike Botts come in an' says: "Haw, haw!"  
An' busted out a laughin' cuz he thort  
Scrimp's tellin' of a joke an' that he ort  
T' come in on the haw-haw good an' strong,  
But he seen in a minute he was wrong,  
Cuz Short was talkin' fie-nance, great an' small,  
An' never had a joke in mind at all!

An' when Scrimp went I heered Ab Watkins snort:  
"By gosh, Botts, you hev queered yerself with Short!"

## ORIGINAL OLD-TIMER

HE can remember when Frisco  
Was jist th' bare side of a bluff;  
An' one feller's dyin' in Utah  
Made more 'n twice widders enough.  
He druv a pack mule in th' Rockies  
Afore they was hardly half grewed;  
An' Denver—why he knowed when Denver  
Was jist a wide place in th' road!

He knowed th' town of Chicago  
When it was jist mist by th' Lake;  
He druv mules all over Milwaukee  
A-lookin' fer crawfish t' bake;  
Knowed Pittsburg afore it was smoky,  
An' walked out o' town in two blocks;  
An' Cleveland, th' fust time he saw it,  
Was jist some hard coal on th' docks!

An' Omaha, fust time he saw it,  
Was jist a pack mule an' a post  
T' hitch to; an' Salt Lake was only  
A sign-board t' p'int t' th' Coast.  
"Passed Injun sign airly this mornin' "  
Was Deadwood wrote down in his log,  
Th' fust time he passed, an' Seattle  
Was jist a rain-drop in a fog!



## ORIGINAL OLD-TIMER

He owned a half section of medder  
Th' corner of State an' Monroe,  
An' traded it off fer a mule team—  
Th' country was settlin' up so  
It jist made him nervous t' see it;  
He often shot black bear fer meat,  
An' plowed up what's Main Street, Milwaukee,  
T' raise some potatoes to eat!

He used t' cut slough grass fer fodder  
In what's now th' heart of St. Paul;  
Alongside of him Davy Crockett  
Was jist a newcomer—that's all.  
Y' see, as th' towns kep' improvin'  
Th' frontier life there lost its zest,  
An' he jist kep' movin' an' movin',  
An' simply grewed up with th' West!

## A PROVIDENTIAL DISCOVERY

WHEN the Circle's fair was ended we had forty dollars  
net,

An' the members of the Circle had been duly called an'  
met

To agree on how to spend it for the glory of the cause,  
An' agreeable to custom an' the Circle's rules an' laws.

Sister Sarah Newton Tarbox thought it orto go to pay  
On the minister's back salary, an' Sarah had her say  
Until Sister Marthy Colby p'inted out it wouldn't do  
Under subdivision sixty-six of chapter twenty-two.

Sister Sarah, squelched, set silent, an' she wouldn't say  
a word,

Save thet now an' then, sarcastic, to the Circle she re-  
ferred

To the heathen, fat an' lazy, in a far-off furrin' clime,  
An' the preacher ouden flour more'n half the mortal  
time.

## A PROVIDENTIAL DISCOVERY

Sister Prudence Wilson Connors humbly ventured to  
suggest  
Thet the minister was needin' of a Sunday coat an'  
vest,  
An' we argyed on it, prayerful, till the whole plan was  
knocked out  
By a leetle p'int of order raised by Sister Susan Stout.

Sister Prudence set there thoughtful through the fol-  
lerin' debate,  
With her Christian sperrit ruffled, an' allowed she orto  
state  
Fer the clearin' of her conscience, thet she would n't  
oncet demur  
If we threw it in the river, it was all the same to her.

Sister Amy Ellen Droppers thought the money sh'u'd  
be lent  
To some needy soul an' honest at a moderate per cent.,  
But the by-laws of the Circle, so said Sister Sophy  
Squeer,  
On the plan of lendin' money wa'n't exactly plain an'  
clear.

Sister Amy Ellen hinted she had nothin' more t' say  
On the plan thet she suggested ef the law stood in the  
way,  
But she said it was a pity the committee on expense  
Had n't framed the Circle's by-laws in accord with  
common sense.

## A PROVIDENTIAL DISCOVERY

Sister Evalina Spriggins said she thought it plain to  
see  
What a Furrin' Mission Circle's bounden duty orto  
be,  
An' she couldn't see how preachers of the Sperrit was  
to roam  
With the Furrin Mission Circles spendin' money here  
at home.

At which Sister Phoebe Lucy Brown arose, an', sum-  
mat het,  
Said she guessed she knew her duty, an' she didn't  
choose to set  
An' hear a sister hintin' in a most onchristian way  
Thet the Furrin Mission Circle was a-goin' *fur* astray!

An' then Sister Spriggins told her thet she had n't  
meant no slur  
On the Furrin Mission Circle an', leastwise of all, at  
her,  
Said she knew thet Sister Phoebe knew her business, it  
was true,  
An' she 'd heerd she knew most everybody else's busi-  
ness, too.

Then good Sister Patience Hitchcock said the Circle  
better burn  
Every cent of it than quarrel, an' she motioned to ad-  
journ  
At which Sister Ellen Jackson riz up slowly on her feet  
An' declared there was an error in the Circle's balance-  
sheet.

## A PROVIDENTIAL DISCOVERY

Stid o' havin' forty dollars over all the fair's expense  
She had found we had a deficit of sixty-seven cents,  
She had got her figgers crosswise when she added up  
her sheets

An' had put expended items in the columns o' receipts!

So with harmony prevailin', Sister Spriggins led in  
prayer,

An' Sister Phoebe Lucy Brown observed to Sister  
Blair

Thet we 're all poor, mortal creeters, who don't seem  
to understand

How the good Lord holds us, helpless, in the holler of  
his hand!

## HIGHER EDUCATION

I've tol' them reckless boys o' mine  
Of no account to go behin'  
Th' gray mule's heels 'thout speakin' to  
Her as a sane man orto do;  
They pay no heed to my advice  
Ontil they git kicked once or twice  
An' then I notice when they stir  
Inside the barn they speak to her.

Which merely goes to show that sense  
Comes mostly fr'm experience;  
I never see a boy but knowed  
More than his Dad; he mus' be showed;  
A broken shin tort them boys more  
Than all th' talk I give before,  
Th' was more wisdom in her heels  
Than all I said, fr'm A t' eels.

## HIGHER EDUCATION

I've talked to 'em—it ain't no use,  
They know most everything thet's loose,  
    Their heads so full 'twould be a sin  
    T' try t' git more knowledge in;  
Fer things thet took me years t' learn  
They simply do not care a durn,  
    But when that gray mule kicked, I vum  
    She helped to educate 'em *some*.

So now I allus save my breath  
T' use t' cool my coffee with;  
    Fer sech a lesson once or twice  
    Is wuth a barrel of advice;  
I find sometimes that ol' gray mule  
Is mighty nigh a normal school  
    T' teach th' kind of common sense  
    Thet we git fr'm experience!

### GROWN UP?

I BEEN lookin' f'r some children  
Thet I used t' know;  
Used t' see 'em in th' papers  
Twenty year ago;  
Thought I used t' hear 'em playin'  
Right around my door;  
Have y' seen 'em—Riley's children?  
Don't they play no more?

Say, but them was really children;  
An' I used to read  
About Annie—Orfant Annie—  
An' I often seed  
One of 'em, I thought, a-singin'  
Right around my door;  
But I haven't seen 'em lately—  
Don't they sing no more?



## GROWN UP?

W'y, I've set an' read about 'em  
An' it almos' seemed  
They was yourn or mine, a-mebbe,  
But I mus' 'a' dreamed.  
An' I thought I see one standin'  
With her dress all tore,  
An' her golden hair all tangled—  
Don't they play no more?

W'y o' course—I wasn't thinkin'—  
They're all growed up now,  
It was years ago I knowed 'em,  
But it seems, somehow,  
Them 'ud allus be but children;  
Might a-knowed afore  
Thet them children—Riley's children—  
Won't come back no more!

## A BREATH FROM THE PLAINS

(On the return of President Theodore Roosevelt to North Dakota in 1903.)

He's comin' back as President—th' man we used t'  
know

As just plain Teddy Roosevelt, nigh twenty years ago;  
He's comin' back as President—it don't seem hardly  
true

But it's writ thar in th' streamers of th' old Red, White  
and Blue!

He's comin' back as President—th' friend of you an'  
me,

Th' head of eighty million of th' free-est souls thet's  
free;

He's back on his old stampin ground—th' land thet  
loves him best

In the fairest, squarest country in thisland of ourn—  
th' West!

Why, her prairies l'arned him freedom and her sun-  
shine give him tan,

Her climate give him stren'th an' health, befittin' of a  
man,

A-climbin' of her hills showed him th' way thar at  
San Juan

When he called her rugged sinews into play to lead  
her brawn;

## A BREATH FROM THE PLAINS

Who 's 'arned a better right today to greet him as her  
own?  
Who'll stand a wall behind him ef she has t' stand  
alone?  
Th' West! Th' Nation's Giant West! An' up thar in  
th' blue  
Is a pledge of faith an' honesty thet never rings un-  
true.

D'ye wonder thet them streamers is a-floatin' middlin'  
high?  
D'ye wonder thet them flags is p'intin' up thar to th'  
sky?  
D'ye mind them cannon boomin'? Y' can almos' hear  
'em say  
In a voice like rumblin' thunder: "Teddy's comin' hyar  
t' day.  
An' th' West, his foster mother, stan's with tears in her  
glad eyes,  
With sunshine in her swellin' heart like sunlight in her  
skies,  
Her arms outstretched t' welcome him—her voice up-  
raised t' call:  
"He's comin' back as President—God bless him!"—an'  
that's all!

## THE CONSERVATIVE

Wes' Burch says everything looks well  
As fur as he can see;  
We've had a right smart rainy spell,  
About as orto be;  
But Wes' don't set a heap o' store  
By rain that has gone by,  
An' says if it don't rain no more,  
She'll be almighty dry!

Wes' Burch says his potatoes look  
First rate this time o' year,  
He had some big enough t' cook,  
All smooth an' nice an' clear;  
But Wes' don't set a heap o' store  
On how they look till fall,  
An' says if they don't grow no more,  
They'll be almighty small!

Wes' Burch says fur as he can see  
Th' grain is up t' date;  
Although a sight of it'll be  
F'r harvest mighty late;  
But Wes' don't set no store on grain  
A-growin' as it ort,  
An' if we shouldn't git no rain,  
She'll be almighty short.

## THE CONSERVATIVE

Wes' Burch has got right smart o' shoats  
A-gittin' plump an' fat,  
But he says 'bout this time he notes  
They allus look like that;  
Wes' says there's mighty few like these  
An' orto bring big pay,  
But some incurable disease  
Might kill 'em any day.

Wes' Burch says he's a hopeful man,  
An' tries t' see things bright;  
He keeps as cheerful as he can  
An' does his farmin' right.  
Wes' Burch says fur as he can see  
Th' prospects is class first,  
But he thinks it is best t' be  
Preparin' f'r th' worst!

## THE PROPHET

OLD Ellery Gregg, when the weather was fine,  
When the sunlight was bubbling and sparkling like  
    wine,  
When the skies were as bright as the dreamings of  
    boys  
And the day seemed to be running over with joys,  
Would squint at the sky and drink in the fresh air  
With a look of distrust and be moved to declare:  
"Ye may think it's Spring, but th' Winter ain't quit!  
I bet ye we pay for this fine weather yit!"

Old Ellery Gregg, when the Autumn was long  
And the birds tarried late and the open brook's song  
In November was heard and the big yellow moon  
Made the fields near as light as the sun did at noon,  
When the earth was aflame with its yellow and red,  
Would look with distrust and a shake of his head:  
"It ain't human natur'—this here kind of thing!  
I bet ye we ketch it nex' Winter, by jing!"

Old Ellery Gregg, when the winds whistled keen,  
When the snow lay knee deep all the fences between  
When the boards creaked and snapped in the walk  
    down the street,  
When the wires sang with frost and the limbs hung  
    with sleet,  
Would tramp down the street with a challenge so grim  
In his eyes as though this had been ordered for him:  
"I tol' ye, by gum, that th' Winter ain't quit;  
I tol' ye we'd pay fer that fine weather yit!"

## A PROBLEM

SOMETIMES I feel like risin' up an' rowin' 'gainst th'  
stream,

A-bendin' to th' oars, hummin' a song;  
Sometimes I look ahead and see some temptin' promise  
gleam,

An' feel like goin' for it good an' strong.  
I leap into th' harness and I make th' water fly,  
The white foam churnin' on it as my boat glides swift-  
ly by,

But I never seem to reach it, tho' it allus 'pears so  
nigh,

Then I feel like droppin' both th' oars an' jes' drift-  
in' along.

Sometimes I sit with blistered hands from holdin' tight  
th' oars,

An' a blistered heart from hopin' on so long,  
I nearly git discouraged, fightin' there between th'  
shores

Of th' stream o' Toil, and wonderin' what is wrong.  
Then I see another rainbow, an' mebbe it may hold  
A treasure at th' end for me. No, I ain't after gold,  
But a treasure o' fulfillment o' my hopes that's growin'  
cold,

But it never gits no nearer, an' I feel like driftin'  
long.

## A PROBLEM

I don't know why it is—some men don' seem t' have  
t' fight,

They jes' drift on a' hummin' of a song;  
The'r boats, they never leak; it seems that good luck  
keeps 'em tight,

An' Providence keeps 'em from steerin' wrong.  
They could fall out in th' water and step out all dry  
and clean,

With an oyster in each pocket, bearin' pearls th'  
shells between,

An' somethin' seems to keep 'em always smilin' an'  
serene,

As they float upon th' water, happy—jes' driftin'  
along.

So I say, sometimes I wonder after all if it's worth  
while

To struggle, struggle, struggle, struggle 'long,  
Bendin' to th' heavy oars, an' rowin' on mile after mile,

Tryin' hard to keep yerself from goin' wrong.  
Th' man that doesn't struggle, well, he's lazy, I agree,  
But he never tastes th' bitterness o' gall that comes  
to ye,

When ye're suppin' disappointment for yer breakfast,  
lunch an' tea,

An' sometimes I think it's jes' as well to sit an' drift  
along.



## A PROBLEM

Then I git another impulse, an' I take th' oars again,  
An' bend my back an' ply 'em good an' strong;  
I wipe away th' tears an' choke th' heavin' sighs, an'  
then

I muster up another snatch o' song.  
I'm happy for a moment when I chase another dream,  
I'm glad, if only for an hour, in watchin' its bright  
gleam,  
An' somethin' seems to tell me that upon th' troubled  
stream  
O' Life th' ain't no place for him who sits an' drifts  
along.

## A TIMOROUS TYRANT

DEACON Skinner is th' boss  
Of his household, y' can bet;  
Sech a real high-strung ol' hoss  
Can't no woman run him yet.  
Don't believe in henpecked men,  
Skeered o' how their wives'll act—  
Takes a little now an' then  
Jist as bitters—that's th' fact!

But he eats a clove, I vum,  
Jist afore he starts f'r hum!

Deacon Skinner ain't a-feared  
Of no woman y' can find;  
He's perlite, but he ain't skeered  
Of th' hull o' womankind.  
Says it only takes jist one  
Fight f'r liberty fit through  
To show wimmen y' ain't run  
By no W. C. T. U.

But he allus asts Bud Speth  
Kin he smell it on his breath!

## A TIMOROUS TYRANT

Deacon Skinner's wife, says he,  
Wouldn't no more dare inquire  
If he's had a drink, than see  
Gasoline put in th' fire.  
Deacon says th' way is to  
Have it out right on th' start;  
Be th' boss, an' you'll git through  
Life without no drift apart.

But he says to Tredwell Pew:  
"Would y' guess I had them two?"

## THE MEETING TIME

Down t' th' homestead for a day,  
When th' scythe is in th' hay,  
When the harvest moon is risin' where th' meadow  
meets th' sky.  
Down t' th' homestead for a day,  
Jes' t' see her an' t' say,  
That th' time is comin' nearer for our weddin'—she  
an' I.

Down t' th' homestead for a day,  
An' how soon it slips away,  
While th' harvesters are hummin' an' th' sickles click  
an' sing.  
Down t' th' homestead for a day,  
Jes' t' see her an' t' say  
That my heart is full of gladness an' I'm bringin' her  
th' ring.

## THE MEETING TIME

Down t' th' homestead, cold and gray,  
Bleak th' skies an' bleak th' day,  
An' th' Autumn winds are sighin' where th' leaves are  
brown an' red.

Down t' th' homestead, cold an' gray,  
An' this was to be th' day—  
An' my tears fall like th' rain, from out th' gray mists  
overhead.

Down' t' th' homestead for a day,  
How the years have slipped away,  
But my heart is always here where those sweet, dead  
dreams buried lie.  
Heart an' head streaked thick with gray,  
An' there's somethin' seems t' say  
That th' time is comin' nearer for our meetin'—she  
an' I.

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT

LEM Hawkins 'll tell you th' wheat's takin' root,  
An' th' weather is fair, but it don't hardly suit;  
It's a little too warm, an' a few cloudy days  
Would help out a lot on th' crop he will raise.  
Lem Hawkins says wheat is th' ticklishes thing  
An' th' easiest hurt, an' you can't tell in spring  
Ef it's goin' t' make crop, an' about th' time when  
You think she's all safe, why, she's ruined again.

Lem Hawkins tells me if th' weather'd drop  
About thirty degrees he might git half a crop.  
His wheat promised well, but he thinks like as not  
It'll all shrivel up ef it keeps bein' hot.  
Th' spring started wet an' she got sech a stand  
An' stooled out so thick that he figgered his land  
Would perduce a big yield, but he thinks he is beat  
Becuz weather like this is jist killin' his wheat.

Lem Hawkins told me 'bout th' first of July  
Thet he might git some wheat ef it quit bein' dry;  
He thought thet his prospects was finer'n silk,  
But it come dry an' hot with his wheat in th' milk.  
Lem says ef it rains an' keeps cool he may grow  
A crop, but his wheat's comin' into th' dough  
An' th' weather is pleasant—hard weather t' beat—  
But it ain't jist th' weather that's best fer th' wheat.

## THE SENSITIVE PLANT

Lem Hawkins he says ef th' balance o' June  
Ain't too cool er too hot, ef it don't rain too soon  
Er hold off too long, ef th' month of July  
Ain't too hot er too cold er too wet er too dry,  
Ef th' ain't any rust, ef th' straw ain't too short,  
Ef th' kernels don't blight an' git filled as they ort,  
Ef th' ain't airy frost, er too blisterin' heat,  
Wal, mebbe, perhaps—wal, he might thresh some  
wheat!

## MISPLACED CONFIDENCE

(Something you may have seen on Circus Day.)

I'LL bet I kin tell it,  
I know jes' as well it  
Is right under that one,  
I'll bet my old hat on  
It. Can't be mistaken,  
Th' can't be no fakin',  
He lifted that nutshell  
High enough so I c'd tell  
That that pea was layin'  
There! Easy as playin',  
He thought I wa'nt lookin',  
Th' ain't any crook in  
The kentry can trick me  
By jiminey crickey!  
I'll jes' fix him plenty;  
Hey, there! Bet ye twenty  
It's right under that one,  
That long, sort o' flat one;  
Put up. That's th' ticket!  
Now let's see ye pick it  
Up!

Gosh, it ain't under,  
I'm busted, by thunder!





## A TALE OF THE TRAIL

I've seen a lot of 'em start out with grit an' spunk to  
scale

Th' hills that purple over there an' somehow lose th'  
trail;

I've seen 'em stop an' start again, not sure about th'  
road;

An' found 'em lost on some blind trail almost afore  
they knowed,

I've seen 'em circlin', tired out, with every pathway  
blind,

With cliffs before 'em, mountain high, an' sloughs an'  
swamps behind.

I've seen 'em stringin' through th' dusk, when twilight's  
gettin' gray

A-lookin' for th' main highroad—poor chaps who've  
lost their way.

It ain't so far from right to wrong—th' trail ain't hard  
to lose;

There's times I'd almost give my horse to know which  
one to choose.

There ain't no signboards on the road t' keep you on  
the track;

Wrong's sometimes white as driven snow, an' right  
looks awful black!

I don't set up to be no judge of right an' wrong in men;  
I've lost the trail sometimes myself—I may get lost  
again.

An' if I see some chap that looks as though he'd gone  
astray

I want to shove my hand in his an' help him find th'  
way.

## DOWN AND OUT

USED to brag when work was slack,  
Nothing else to do,  
Couldn't put him on his back,  
No use tryin' to.  
Said he'd been in many a bout,  
Wrastlin' every day,  
Nobody could put him out,  
Wasn't built that way.

Little feller name o' Hall,  
Well known here in town,  
Wasn't neither short nor tall,  
Tried to put him down.  
Used to wrestle every day,  
Wrastled quite a bit,  
Hall 'ud lose, but always say:  
"Bet I throw him yit!"

Wal—they wrestled on for years,  
Finally, one day,  
After all his jokes an' jeers,  
Hall put him away.  
Put him out for good and all;  
"Don't know Hall?" How so?  
First name's Al an' last name's Hall,  
Middle name was Coe.

## A LETTER HOME

LIKE to come and see you, daddy, and perhaps I will  
some day ;

Like to come back East and visit, but I wouldn't care  
to stay.

Glad you're doing well, and happy ; glad you like your  
country best,

But, for me, I always hunger for the freedom of the  
West.

There's a wholesomeness about it that I couldn't quite  
explain ;

Once you breathe this air you love it and you long for  
it again ;

There's a tie you can't dis sever in the splendor of its  
sky—

It's just home to you forever and I can't just tell you  
why.

It's so big and broad and boundless and its heaven is  
so blue

And the metal of its people always rings so clear and  
true ;

All its billowed acres quiver like the shudder of the sea  
And its waves roll, rich and golden, in upon the shore  
for me.

## A LETTER HOME

Why, your farm and all the others that we used to think  
so fine  
Wouldn't—lump 'em all together—make a corner lot  
of mine;  
And your old red clover pasture, with its gate of fence  
rails barred,  
Why, it wouldn't make a grass plot in our district  
school house yard.

Not a foot has touched its prairies but is longing to  
return,  
Not an eye has seen the sunset on its western heavens  
burn  
But looks back in hungry yearning, with the memory  
grown dim,  
And the zephyr of its prairies breathes the cadence of  
a hymn  
That is sweet and full of promise as the "Beulah Land"  
we knew  
When we used to sit together in the queer, old-fash-  
ioned pew,  
And at eventide the glory of the sun and sky and sod  
Bids me bare my head in homage and in gratitude to  
God.

Yes, I love you, daddy, love you with a heart that's  
true as steel,  
But there's something in Dakota makes you live and  
breathe and feel;

## A LETTER HOME

Makes you bigger, broader, better; makes you know  
the worth of toil;  
Makes you free as are her prairies and as noble as her  
soil;  
Makes you kingly as a man is; makes you manly as a  
king;  
And there's something in the grandeur of her seasons'  
sweep and swing  
That casts off the fretting fetters of your East and  
marks you blest  
With the vigor of the prairies—with the freedom of  
the West!

## DOCTHER DOOLEY—LL. D.

I've bin wa-aiting f'r some college,  
Blessed wid dignity an' knowledge,  
    Av which wit is first vice president and humor is  
        thrustee,  
To sind all th' world a greetin'  
Av a quite informal meetin'  
    To confer on Ma-artin Dooley th' degree of LL. D.

Shure, they do it th' world over;  
"Docther" Cha-ancy—"Docther" Grover—  
    "Docther"—half a thousand others I could mintion  
        if I choose;  
An' in all th' world av wit or  
Humor, tell me who is fitter  
    Than is Mister Ma-artin Dooley f'r t' fill a docther's  
        shoes?

Jist imagine it: "Yours thruly,  
'Docther'—'Docther' Ma-artin Dooley."  
    Th' devil fly away wid ye, an' don't ye understand  
That av all th' famous min I see  
Jist Dooley's lift an' Hinnessy,  
    Who haven't yet bin docthered as their services  
        dema-and.

DOCTHER DOOLEY—LL. D.

Shure, I'm timpled t' be startin'  
Jist a little wan f'r Ma-artin,  
    Av which ivery last good fellow in th' land shall be  
        thrustee,  
Widout faculty—no chaffin'—  
Save th' faculty f'r laughin',  
    An' confer on Ma-artin Dooley th' degree av LL. D.

Thin, be hivins, sir, whiniver  
Ye had blues or torpid liver  
    An' were needin' av a tonic—an' there's minny needs  
        th' sa-ame—  
Y'd be sindin' f'r yours thruly,  
"Docther"—"Docther" Ma-artin Dooley  
    An' be takin' his prescription to th' glory av his  
        na-ame.



## A LITTLE BIT O' RILEY

Jes' a little bit o' Riley when th' twilight's growin' dim,  
You can open of it anywheres an' read a verse from  
him.

It rests me when I'm weary, an' it cheers me when I'm  
sad,

An' sometimes th' pathos in it, while I'm cryin', makes  
me glad;

For I like it 'cause it's human, an' my heart jes' seems  
t' say

That if it could speak, like Riley's, it would talk jes'  
thataway!

Jes' a little bit o' Riley when th' summer is in bloom,  
'Cause it sort o' adds a measure to th' fragrance an'  
perfume;

It seems to lend new meanin' to th' chatter an' th' song  
Of th' birds that cry up yonder an' th' brooks that  
dance along;

An' I like it 'cause it's honest an' my heart jes' seems  
t' say

That if it could speak, like Riley's, it would talk jes'  
thataway!

Jes' a little bit o' Riley when the shadders fall on me—  
(An' I know I'll meet my Pilot where th' stream be-  
comes th' sea!)

An' I want to meet him honest, as a man should meet  
a man,

An' I want to be clean-hearted an' as decent as I can.  
So I want a verse o' Riley an' I want to smile an' say:  
"If my heart could plead for pardon it would talk jes'  
thataway!"

## THE WRECK OF THE WOMAN'S CIRCLE

SUE ALLEN! Laws o' mercy! We ain't never had no  
peace  
Since th' day she j'ined th' Circle with her sister an'  
her niece  
An' began a-pickin' flaws an' findin' fault with every-  
thing  
Fr'm th' organ in th' choir loft to th' pastor's study-  
wing.

Said th' church was small an' stuffy an' we orto build  
a new,  
An' she fumed an' fussed an' fretted till she had us all  
a-stew,  
An' she argyed an' she argyed till she got us to agree  
That we'd raise a thousand dollars if th' Mission made  
it three.

It was social, social, social, with each heavin' mortal  
breath,  
We must raise a thousand dollars, so we socialed 'em  
to death,  
It was cream an' cake an' chicken till Melinda Wilkins  
said  
She would give us *all* her earnin's if we'd see that *she*  
was fed.

An' we never had a meetin' but it turned on ways an'  
means,  
On th' cost o' lath an' plaster an' th' size o' window  
screens,

## THE WRECK OF THE WOMAN'S CIRCLE

An' she had us money-grubbin' like a lot o' Mammon's  
slaves

When we'd orto been a-thinkin' of our sinful souls an'  
graves.

When Sapphira Snodgrass left us it made somethin' of  
a stir,

For she said th' pace we'd taken was a trifle fast for  
her;

So she sent her resignation an' she told us plain an'  
clear

That she wasn't goin' t' try to lay up all her treasures  
*here.*

Marthy Wiggins started even with Sue Allen at th'  
post

But before we'd raised five hundred she had given up  
th' ghost;

An' she sent word to th' Circle she had done her level  
best

But she'd wrecked her nervous system an' she'd have  
to take a rest.

But Sue Allen never faltered; with a firm, forbiddin'  
eye

She declared we'd keep our pledges an' she knitted "Do  
or Die"

In a fancy lettered motto which induced Matilda Skidd  
To observe it didn't matter if we Died or if we Did.

## THE WRECK OF THE WOMAN'S CIRCLE

Blossom Craven she staid loyal to th' project, floor to  
dome,  
An' earned hopes of high salvation by neglectin' things  
at home  
Till her husband got to drinkin' since she left him in  
th' lurch,  
An' she felt his mortal temple more important than th'  
church.

At th' forty-second social, held on Primrose Potter's  
lawn,  
I was leanin' on an ellow, feelin' kind o' worn an'  
gone,  
When Rebekah Mullin's eldest came across th' lawn  
to tell  
How Rebekah Mullin's youngest had just fallen down  
th' well.

He was fished out, wet an' gaspin', but Rebekah then  
an' there  
Sent a word by Ellen Wilson that she guessed she'd  
done her share,  
An' hereafter she was willin' to do what was right an'  
just,  
But her children needed watchin', an' she'd have to do  
that fust.

When we'd raised eight hundred dollars, leavin' only  
two to gain,  
Sarah Pembroke fell in harness fr'm th' pressure o' th'  
strain,

## THE WRECK OF THE WOMAN'S CIRCLE

An' she said it was a question between givin' up th'  
boast  
Made by Sue to raise a thousand or of givin' up th'  
ghost.

When we'd sold our whole possessions for whatever  
they would fetch  
To squeeze money out o' nothin' an' were comin' down  
th' stretch,  
Amy Ringrose, bakin' doughnuts for a Woman's Food  
Exchange  
Slipped an' scalded herself dreadful in th' hot lard on  
th' range.

So th' Circle by th' wayside faded slowly fr'm our view,  
An' we had to change th' rules to make a quorum out  
o' two.  
An' th' day we reached th' limit of th' task that Sue  
had set  
There was only me an' Susan when th' Woman's Cir-  
cle met.

An' we've got th' thousand dollars that we pledged our-  
selves to get  
An' th' Mission's give th' other that it promised us;  
—an' yet  
Sue Allen, she admitted as she wept upon my neck,  
That we'd got th' Church we wanted but th' Circle was  
a wreck!

## ON THE ROAD

HANDSOME pair o' Colts—eh, Stranger?

No, there ain't a bit of danger.

Let yer vision sort o' linger

On that off one—minds my finger

At th' slightest touch. Be keerful!

'Cause I'm allus sort o' fearful

They're so everlastin' willin';

Might go off an' make a killin'.

Handsome pair o' Colts, I tell ye.

Mind yer hands! It's jes' as well ye

Keep 'em lifted like I told ye,

'Cause it ain't no odds how bold ye

Be—it won't do ye no service

If my finger sh'd get nervous,

An' I wouldn't have 'em harm ye.

Jes' stand still till I disarm ye.

See the muzzle o' that nigh one?

Feller right here tried t' buy one

Not a week ago—it's funny,

But he shelled out all his money

Jes' th' minute he laid eyes on

Him. Remarkable surprisin'

What a pair o' Colts 'll fetch ye

'Fore th' vigilantes get ye!

## ON THE ROAD

Come on, Stranger—better loosen!  
Tain't no use in yer refusin'  
    'Cause th' odds is all agin' ye,  
    An' I ain't a-goin' t' chin ye  
More'n an hour or two. So hurry  
'Cause these Colts is apt t' worry,  
    An' whenever they get fretful  
    They jes' act up somethin' dreadful.

Thanks! That's handsome! Now jes' mind me;  
Drive along. Don't look behind ye  
    Er yer hour-glass's sand 'll  
    Run out fast. They're hard t' handle.  
Keep straight on thar—that's a wise 'un!  
Forty-fours? Oh, yes. Surprisin'  
    What a pair o' Colts 'll fetch ye.  
    Evenin', Stranger. Glad I met ye!

## ON THE TRAIL

Got a price on his head,  
An' th' ranch-boss, he said  
He'd prefer him alive, but he would take him dead.  
Same ol' trouble, o' course,  
Drink an' Cap. R. E. Morse  
An' a dash f'r th' plains on another man's hoss.

Knowed him since he's a lad,  
Used t' bunk with his Dad,  
Ain't a natural tough, but in liquor he's bad.  
Fill hi'self to his chin,  
Soak hi'self to th' skin  
An' then sit around waitin' a chance to mix in.

Say! Th' youngster could ride  
Anything with a hide  
On its back where th' hair was a-growin' outside,  
Roll a good cigarette  
On his hoss on a bet  
When th' cayuse was buckin' an' never lost yet.

Sittin' there in th' camp,  
Sort o' worn out an' damp,  
An' his hoss ga'nt an' tired fr'm a ninety-mile tramp  
Through th' snow an' th' sleet,  
An' he took liquor neat,  
F'r th' stuff seemed t' be both his drink an' his meat.



## ON THE TRAIL

I dunno! Somethin' hot  
Passed between 'em—a shot,  
An' th' other man drew summat slower 'n he ought.  
Well! It wasn't much loss,  
But th' big buckskin hoss  
That he tuk when he skipped was th' pride of th' boss!

'Taint because that galoot  
That he killed with a beaut  
Of a shot had an idee he knew how to shoot.  
Ef he jest hadn't tuk  
That especial ol' buck-  
Skin th' boss broke hi'self 'twouldn't matter—wuss  
luck!

Got a price on his head,  
An' th' ranch-boss, he said  
He'd prefer him alive, but he would take him dead.  
'Cause a man ain't much loss,  
But it's time, says th' boss,  
That all plainsmen was learnin' a hoss is a hoss.

## “BACK TO OLD AUNT MARY’S”

Now we read in song and story of the reminiscent  
glory of the woods and fields of boyhood, as in  
fancy we go back,

Back in dreams to old Aunt Mary’s, back to bees and  
huckleberries, back to apples, plums, and cher-  
ries, back to haymow, field, and stack;

And the poet at this season for some psychologic reason  
feels the conscious guilt of treason if he fails  
to take his pen

And achieve his rhythmic duty of extolling woodland  
beauty and his verses always end with “Could  
I but go back again!”

Some would go “back to the wildwood, in the inno-  
cence of childhood;” some are headed for the  
orchard where the apples in the sun

Swing and ripen, richly, redly, while the bird songs  
in a medley fill the air with mellow music and  
the days pass one by one;

Some would go back with fine fancies, to Aunt Mol-  
lie’s, Jane’s, or Nancy’s—(all poets seem to have  
a stock of aunts that never fail!)

And when evening shades are falling and the whip-  
poorwill is calling—(every poet has a whip-  
poorwill!)—you know how goes the tale!

"BACK TO OLD AUNT MARY'S"

But forgive these fancy-revels, and forgive us dream-  
ing devils, who, from seventh-story windows  
may look out upon the street

Where men sweat and steam and swelter, where the  
world seems helter-skelter, if we dream of  
creeks and hollows where the grass is cool and  
sweet;

If we dream that we are going where the Summer  
flowers are blowing and where husbandmen are  
mowing in the clover red and white,

If we write a verse whose fancies carry us back to  
Aunt Nancy's, for it comforts us and gives us  
half an hour of delight!

## THE VILLAGE COBBLER

HELLO, Doc. Got th' rheumatiz.  
I dunno what on airth it is,  
But jest let th' weather change a bit  
An' I'm mighty nigh down flat with it.  
I was goin' t' mend them shoes of yourn,  
But I jest ain't quite got around to it yit!

You healthy rascal! Don't you smile,  
'Cause th' years 'll git you after while.  
Oh, I remember—yes, I do,  
When I was young an' strong, like you,  
But I been bent over this bench so long  
That I squeak and squawk like a bran-new shoe.

Mornin', Squire! Kind o' nasty day.  
Oh, yes, I keep on peggin' away.  
But it don't seem like I git much done,  
Though I'm up with th' very first peep o' sun.  
I did hope to have that job o' yourn,  
But I ain't got around yet to mend that one.

Day, Mis' Green! Hope I see you well.  
Oh, I'm so so. Jest a little spell  
O' my old complaint—sort o' saps my grit,  
But I'm able to do what work I git,  
An' I was goin' t' have that patchin' done,  
But I jest ain't quite got around to it yit!

## THE VILLAGE COBBLER

Howdy, Ben! Got yer plantin' done?  
Oh, I'm about as I allus run.  
I'm sufferin' some, as I allus do,  
But I'm able t' drive a peg or two.  
An' I was goin' t' have them boots all done,  
But I ain't got around yit to get 'em through.

No, I ain't much of a hand t' fret.  
As long as I'm healthy enough t' set  
At th' ol' work bench down here an' git  
My work out prompt I ain't dead yit.  
Mis' Wise? How' do! Them shoes of yourn?  
Well, I got one done, but th' sole don't fit!

No, I don't fret if it's shine or rain.  
I peg away an' I don't complain.  
My shoes are good an' I make 'em fit  
As well as a mortal man can git  
'Em to. Hello! There's Deacon Hayes  
An' I ain't got around to his job yit!

## CONSERVING THE RESOURCES

Hod Kellar said he read o' late,  
In forty thousand years or nigh,  
Th' water'll all evaporate  
From off th' earth an' leave it dry;  
He said th' moon is dried up now,  
An' water's scarcer, he can tell,  
By lookin' down an' seein' how  
It's gittin' shaller in his well.  
An' Peleg Potter winked his eye,  
An' says by drinkin' only rye  
Hod's savin' water, so there'll be  
A-plenty for Posterity!

Hod told us up in Tinker's store  
That wood was bein' used so free,  
He read there wouldn't be no more  
In 'bout another century.  
An' he said he remembered well  
Logs three foot through, an' told us how  
They used to rip 'em, an' says, "Tell  
Me where are them big sawlogs now?"  
An' Peleg said he understood  
Why Hod would never saw no wood—  
'Cuz he's afraid that it would be  
A crime ag'in Posterity!

## CONSERVING THE RESOURCES

Hod said he read th' stock o' coal  
Was gittin' lower—he'd allow  
Th' won't a single livin' soul  
Have any fifty years from now;  
He used to git a ton for less  
Than he can git a bag to-day,  
An' wasn't sure, but said he guess  
We'd frittered all th' stock away.  
An' Peleg said perhaps that's why  
Hod's coal bin was most always shy—  
He borrs what he burns 'cuz he  
Don't want to cheat Posterity.

Hod said he read th' land to-day  
Was bein' cropped so much an' fast  
Th' juices in it that makes hay  
An' corn an' fodder wouldn't last.  
He said in fifty years or so  
Th' way they use it now, by gosh,  
A half an acre wouldn't grow  
A sweet potater or a squash!  
An' Peleg he said he knew now  
Why Hod would never drive a plow—  
He's so afeard th' land won't be  
Ez fertile for Posterity!

## ART IN FROZEN CREEK

HE was a tourist, rich I guess ; an' he stepped down off  
th' train

Way out at th' town o' Frozen Crick, in th' heart o' th'  
Western plain ;

Hi Cobb was there an' Wryneck Potts an' Amos Drake  
an' me ;

(We allus 'lowed to 'tend th' train to see what we  
could see.)

He stepped up brisk to Wryneck Potts an' he says to  
him : "My man,

Have you got a drug store handy here?" An' Wry-  
neck Potts he ran

An' p'inted out th' one he had an' th' tourist hurried  
there,

Ez if somebody was in straits an' he had no time t'  
spare.

An' Wryneck Potts he told Hi Cobb from th' feller's  
look of pain

He thought his wife or child or kin was dyin' on th'  
train,

An' Cobb he turned to Amos Drake an' Amos turned  
to me

But he didn't say he 'lowed on it, he said 'twas true,  
you see ;

An' I says : "Cobb, go git Doc Duff an' bring him  
over here

While I run up to th' funder end an' tell th' engineer,  
So's he don't pull out ;"—'cuz we may be rough an'  
slow in Frozen Crick,

But we got a sight o' sympathy if there's anybody  
sick.



## ART IN FROZEN CREEK

An' Cobb he run an' so did I an' Doc says: "Is she bad?"

'Cuz a couple dozen quinine pills was all th' dope he had;

An' he an' Cobb come runnin' back an' he says to Wryneck: "Jump!

Go fetch me a couple quarts of rye an' a crutch an' a stomach pump."

'Cuz Doc he liked to be prepared; an' then I run across To th' drug store where th' feller was an' I says to him: "Ol' Hoss,

We've got th' doctor over there 'cuz in sickness we're all pards."

An' he looked at me an' says: "Oh, Pshaw! I'm buyin' postal cards!"

We might 'a' used th' feller rough, but he run back to th' train

An' before th' word of it got out th' train was gone again;

An' Wryneck Potts with crutch an' pump an' his couple quarts o' rye

For first relief, went back again 'cuz th' crisis was gone by.

An' Cobb he says th' postal craze is gettin' smeared on thick

When any one wants postal cards with scenes o' Frozen Crick,

An' Doc Duff says: "A call's two plunks an' who's to pay my fee?"

So Wryneck Potts says: "Step up, Gents. This time th' drink's on me."

## FOR THE LOVE OF A HORSE

You've got the drop, Sandy! There's cottonwoods handy; I ain't no spring chicken—I know what it means!

So get out your halter; you won't see me falter! I ain't no cheap tenderfoot still in his teens!

You've raced me and chased me, but you ain't disgraced me! Old Baldy went lame from a prairie dog hole—

You're crippled, old fellow, but there ain't no yellow in all of your make-up, from crupper to poll!

Don't hesitate, Sandy! I know it's onhandy to hang an old friend just for stealin' a horse;

But get your traps ready for I ain't onsteady; an' justice is justice an' must take its course!

I gave all your posse a run that was flossy, through sage brush an' cactus, up cut bank an' hill,

An' now that you've caught me an' got me, why rot me! I'm just a plain outlaw, who bows to your will.

Want Baldy? Well, hold him! An' Sandy, I sold him—I got in a jackpot an' needed the dough;

I sold him to Meehan, th' same time agreein' that he'd sell him back when I wanted it so;

An' Meehan, th' greaser, he went back on me, Sir, an' wouldn't make good when I flashed him a roll,

An' said I had sold him for keeps an' I told him some things not intended to comfort his soul.

## FOR THE LOVE OF A HORSE

Sell Baldy? Why, Sandy, he's carried me handy a  
hundred long miles in a many day's sun;  
An' come in a prancin', his head up, an' dancin', just  
like a young tenderfoot sportin' a gun;  
He ain't no cheap quitter! He'll cut out a critter an'  
hold him hard fast when he's roped an' been  
thrown;  
An' five years I knowed him an' five years I rode him  
an' never a leg crossed his back but my own.

I got set for roamin'—there's work in Wyomin'—an'  
when that durn greaser went back on his word  
I went an' called Baldy an' when he was called he just  
pricked up his ears an' came out of th' herd;  
An' say! When he'd whinner, as I am a sinner, I put  
both my arms 'round his neck an' I cried,  
An' then I just hollered an' Baldy, he follered—an'  
you know th' rest an' th' end of th' ride!

So that's th' tale, Sandy; there's cottonwoods handy!  
An' I ain't afraid of th' law of th' plains,  
But you can damn me, Sir, if that thievin' greaser will  
ever get Baldy—I'll blow out his brains.  
What's that? Nothin' doin'? No tree party brewin'?  
Well, Sandy, that's handsome! "Just go on  
my course?"  
What's this that's a-fillin' my eyes? Tom McQuillen  
a-weepin'! An' all for th' love of a horse!

## A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

HER that wuz Liddy Thomas once—married a man  
named Brown,  
Who run away an' left his wife; so Liddy came back  
to town  
With the cunnin'est little baby, but nary a cent had  
she,  
So we summoned a special meetin' o' the Aid Society.

The members wuz summat flustered; we'd all o' us  
paid our dues  
Till the treasury wuz a-groanin', but never a call to  
use  
A cent o' the funds we'd gathered till Liddy came  
back to town—  
Her that wuz Liddy Thomas who married a man  
named Brown.

The case wuz ourn in justice, since we had diskivvered  
it,  
But the Women's Benevolent Circle felt called upon  
to sit  
In a solemn special session when news o' it got about,  
An' stubbornly they insisted on a-helpin' Liddy out!

So Tabithy Jenkins Thomas, who wuz Worthy Presi-  
dent  
O' the Aid Society, told 'em they shouldn't pay a cent;  
That Liddy's distress wuz ourn, an' there wuzn't the  
slightest call  
Fer the Women's Benevolent Circle to interfere at all.

## A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Think o' the meanness on't! Our body eleven year  
old,  
With never a chance to aid distress till this one, as I've  
told;  
An' after we'd been an' found it, to have them a-tryin'  
to claim  
The credit fer helpin' Liddy! We felt it a mortal  
shame!

So Tabithy Jenkins Thomas she writ 'em a little note  
That *we* would take care o' Liddy, an' *they* needn't pay  
a groat;  
An' she called it a bit onchristian fer them to be  
dippin' in  
When we had *diskivvered* Liddy, forsook o' her kith  
an' kin.

Mehitabel Prudence Tippen, the Benevolent Circle's  
head,  
Writ back to us summat uppish, an' in her epistle said  
That Charity's realms wuz boundless as the stars in  
heaven were,  
Which wuz jest the kind o' letter we figgered we'd  
git from her.

Then Tabithy writ another, an' say, twuz a scorcher,  
too,  
A-tellin' Mehitabel Tippen some things that wuz good  
an' true;

## A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

An' pendin' Miss Tippen's answer, she had Liddy's  
case referred  
To the Indigent Poor committee, to wait till we had  
some word.

Now here wuz a purty pickle! Not one o' us but jest  
yearned  
To be doin' fer Liddy Thomas, an' yit we jest fumed  
an' burned  
With hon'able indignation, an' couldn't lend aid,  
becuz  
We must wait fer Mehitabel Tippen, an' settle whose  
case it wuz.

Mehitabel Tippen answered, in the course o' a week  
or so,  
With a note to Tabithy Thomas that wuz jest full o'  
brag an' blow,  
In which she again insisted there wuzn't no claim on  
Need,  
An' Charity wuz a blessin' that never acknowledged  
creed!

An' Tabithy she wuz hoppin'! She read it all through  
an' vowed  
By all o' the stars in heaven there shouldn't no one be  
'lowed  
To interfere in the case o' Liddy if she had to go an'  
stay  
On watch beside Liddy's bedside, an' keep other folks  
away.

## A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

So the Indigent Poor committee wuz ordered to make  
report,  
An' we authorized sech expenses as all o' us thought  
we ort,  
But found, when we looked fer Liddy to prove our  
contention with,  
She'd been taken indoors an' cared fer by a fam'ly  
name o' Smith!

Oh, the burnin' injustice o' it! Our treasury groanin'  
fat,  
An' Mehitabel's interferin' permittin' a thing like that!  
A-provin' that sisterhood o' love is only a dazzlin'  
myth,  
An' thrustin' *our* crown o' glory on a family name o'  
Smith!

## THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW YEAR

THROUGH the New Year I can see them from the distant lands and far  
Movin' Westward, Westward, Westward, where the fertile prairies are ;  
See them, many a man and woman, like the Pilgrim sires of old,  
Come to bid the soil be broken, come to bid the fields be gold ;  
In the valleys that were silent come the droves and flocks to browse,  
Sheep are bleating from the hillsides and I hear the low of cows ;  
And the lights like stars are twinkling, where the bison used to roam ;  
Twinkling lights from many a cabin where the settler finds him Home.

Through the New Year I can see them—see the plowman guide his share,  
See the seed of Spring flung broadcast and the fields grown green and fair,  
I can see the glow of forges, hear the hum of mill and mill  
And the chimes outrung of Labor that will nevermore be still.



## THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW YEAR

See the granaries uprearing of the harvest, yours or  
mine,  
Like the sentinels of Ceres set to mark her far-flung  
line,  
And the song of share and sickle, of the seedtime and  
the Fall  
Is the song the New Year brings me—is the West's  
Processional.

And the New Year brings me gladness that the West  
is fair and free,  
With the doors of Hope swung open bidding enter  
you and me;  
That its acred plains are boundless, that its arch of  
sky is blue,  
That its heart is beating joyous, that the soul of it is  
true;  
That the men of it are brothers, that the creed of it is  
Toil,  
That the seal of it is Honor—Honor in the fruits of  
soil,  
That the song of it is Promise, echoed gladly through  
and through  
All its fields and hills and valleys and resung by me  
and you.

## A RURAL MORALIST

HOD Graham says we ain't got no more idee  
Of th' way that th' country is run  
Than nothin' at all, an' th' whole thing 'll fall  
Into wreck if there ain't somethin' done;  
If we just had today men like Webster and Clay—  
But there ain't no such statesmen as these;  
So dishonesty's rife in political life—  
(And he weighed his hand in with the cheese.)

Hod says nobody knows where th' tax money goes  
An' th' funds of th' people an' sich;  
An' what can we expect from th' men we elect  
An' th' all-around craze to git rich;  
So as fur as he knows from th' way th' world goes  
There ain't no relief he can see;  
Till we all learn ag'in to declare war on sin,  
(And he weighed in the scoop with the tea.)

## A RURAL MORALIST

Hod says morals is slack an' we ought to go back  
To th' days of our earliest youth,  
When a feller was taught to do just as he ought  
An' th' wasn't no discount on truth;  
When a man's word was good an' he did as he should  
An' the feller who served Uncle Sam  
Worked as hard as though he worked for you or for  
me,  
(And he weighed in his knife with the ham.)

An' Hod says that th' more he runs grocery store  
An' the more that he studies an' reads,  
Th' more he's afraid we are on th' down grade,  
With our morals all grown up to weeds;  
An' th' one thing to do is for me an' for you  
An' for every respectable soul,  
To stick to th' ways of th' old-fashioned days,  
(So he weighed himself in with the goal.)

## SUNSET ON THE PRAIRIES

THEY have tamed it with their harrows; they have  
broken it with plows;  
Where the bison used to range it some one's built  
himself a house;  
They have stuck it full of fence posts, they have  
girdled it with wire,  
They have shamed it and profaned it with an automo-  
bile tire;  
They have bridged its gullied rivers; they have peopled  
it with men;  
They have churched it, they have schooled it, they have  
steepled it—Amen.  
They have furrowed it with ridges, they have seeded  
it with grain,  
And the West that was worth knowing I shall never  
see again.

They have smothered all its campfires, where the  
beaten plainsman slept;  
They have driven up their cattle where the skulking  
coyote crept;  
They have made themselves a pasture where the timid  
deer would browse,  
Where the antelope were feeding they have dotted o'er  
with cows;

## SUNSET ON THE PRAIRIES

There's a yokel's tuneless whistling down the bison's  
winding trail,  
Where the redman's arrow fluttered there's a woman  
with a pail  
Driving up the cows for milking; they have cut its  
wild extent  
Into forty-acre patches till its glory is all spent.

I remember in the sixties, when as far as I could see,  
It had never lord or ruler but the buffalo and me;  
Ere the blight of man was on it, and the endless acres  
lay  
Just as God Almighty left them on the restful Seventh  
Day;  
When no sound rose from its vastness but a murmured  
hum and dim  
Like the echoed void of Silence in an unheard Prairie  
hymn;  
And I lay at night and rested in my bed of blankets  
curled  
Much alone as if I was the only man in all the world.

But the prairie's passed, or passing, with the passing  
of the years,  
Till there is no West worth knowing and there are no  
Pioneers;  
They have riddled it with railroads, throbbing on and  
on and on,  
They have riddled it of dangers till the zest of it is  
gone;

## SUNSET ON THE PRAIRIES

And I've saddled up my pony, for I'm dull and lone-  
some here,  
To go westward, westward, westward, till we find a  
new frontier;  
To get back to God's own wildness and the skies we  
used to know—  
But there is no West; it's conquered—and I don't  
know where to go.

## THE TIREDEST MAN

(Old Story.)

LAZY Ben Shiftless (may his name be blessed  
In song and story, for his love of rest),  
Once sat him down, a hot tear in each eye,  
With life disgusted and resolved to die;  
Not that in life was nothing he admired  
But that the work of breathing made him tired;  
Sighed that the muscles of his heaving breast  
Throbbled on and on and would not rest;  
So long the goddess of repose he wooed,  
Too languid he became to earn his food;  
The landscape wearied him, the running streams  
Clouded his days and haunted all his dreams  
Because they dared to run; regret but lurked  
For him in cider just because it worked,  
Nor would he drink of it; he scorned the trees,  
Because they rustled in the passing breeze.  
So tired and tired he grew, until at length  
His neighbors gathered, with united strength,  
Seeing that life to him was but a curse,  
Dug a deep grave and put him in a hearse,  
Drove him away with solemn tread and slow,  
(Too weary he to ask where they might go),  
While they, with stern resolve set out to drive  
To the churchyard and bury him alive.

## THE TIREDEST MAN

Now Deacon Goodsoul, with a curious eye,  
Espied the pageant as it passed him by,  
Made eager inquiry and asked the cause  
Of this fell disregard of mode and laws.  
Then solemnly to him the driver spoke,  
While Ben, asleep till now, heard as he woke:  
"This is Ben Shiftless—he's too tired to live,  
He has no food and not a man will give  
Him bread; and we, his neighbors, think it best  
To bury him and let him stay and rest."

"Stay," cried the Deacon, "I will give him corn,  
An hundred bushels on this very morn,  
And that will serve his being to sustain,  
Halt, now, I pray and drive him back again!"

Up from the coffin then Ben pushed the lid,  
The fastenings that held the door undid,  
Thrust forth his head and twisting the brass knob,  
Asked if the corn was shelled or on the cob.

"'Tis on the cob," the Deacon said, surprised.  
"Ah, me," sighed Ben, "'tis just as I surmised.  
I'd have to shell it. Thanks, Deacon, indeed,  
I guess we'll let the funeral proceed."



## A LADY'S LETTER OF REGRET

"INDEED, I regret that I cannot accept,"

(Oh, Lord, what a whopper was that!)

"Poor writing is weak; if I only could speak,"

(Yes, if I could speak—through my hat!)

"I feel that you'd know that it just grieves me so."

(If I went I just know I should die)

"For it's always a treat at your dear house to meet!"

(Oh, yes, it's a treat—in your eye!)

"Your at-home cards enclosed found me quite indisposed"

(To accept—but I don't write it so.)

"And I really don't dare yet to risk the night air."

(And your airs would kill me, I know.)

"I would come and right quick if I weren't so sick"

(Of the trashy amusements you shower!)

"You dear soul, you don't know how much I'd like to go"

(Before I'd been there half an hour.)

"I'm sure that each guest will with pleasure be blessed."

(I'm blessed if I envy their lot!)

"I'd give anything to hear dear Clara sing!"

(How thankful I am that I'll not!)

"I know I will hear from my friends just how dear

Was your function" (if any endure),

"And I know 'tis a fact 'twill be nice as your tact."

(I pity it if 'tis as poor!)

## THE REGENERATION

ON the first of January he resolved he would be very kind and good thenceforth to Mary, who for years had been his wife ;

He would not be soft or sappy, but as a good hearted chap, he would do more to make her happy and to bless their married life ;

He had always loved her greatly but had shown it too sedately, and he had been thinking lately of the many little ways

In which he might show affection, and while he would pass inspection, yet he knew that some correction would entitle him to praise.

So at breakfast time he told her that as it was growing colder (and they both were getting older and susceptible to cold)

She must go to Hyde and Water for some furs of mink or otter, for 'twas years since he had bought her any furs and hers were old ;

He would like to get her sable and next year he might be able ; he remarked upon the table and the excellence of fare ;

Said the biscuit was delicious and the bacon so nutritious. "Who is there," he said, "to wish us more of gladness than we share?"

## THE REGENERATION

She was breathless and she wondered if somehow he had not blundered. Could it be some strain had sundered him from reason? When he left

She sat down quite faint and worried, for he had not, breathless, hurried through his breakfast and then scurried for his car. Was he bereft

Of his senses? She was getting very nervous from her fretting and her thoughts were all for letting Doctor Pilsenpouder know.

For perhaps he needed dosing; scientific diagnosing, or a rest from tasks engrossing—she would tell the doctor so.

Then, while worries thickly clustered, rang the telephone and flustered as she was somehow she mustered up the courage to reply;

And her husband's voice so cheery said: "I've sent some flowers, Dearie, for the day is rather dreary"—and she heard him say good-bye.

Which confirmed her first suspicion of his sorrowful condition and she went about her mission of housekeeping much in fear

Of his growing aberration and her mental perturbation was beyond all calculation and her fancyings were drear.

## THE REGENERATION

When at dinner time, precisely, on the hour he came  
and nicely groomed and kissed her oncelly,  
twicely, she compelled herself to smile;  
And he kept up such a chatter as he carved things on  
the platter she was sure what was the matter,  
and she watched him all the while;  
But she was alarmed, fear smitten and her cheek in  
terror bitten when he told her he had written  
to her mother to prepare  
To come visiting with Mary ere the end of January,  
and that he'd be more than very glad to have  
her visit there.

Then he saw her cheek grow paler and he wondered  
what could ail her, for her color seemed to fail  
her and her growing fear was such  
That he rushed across and got her smelling salts and  
gave her water—for the roses and the otter and  
this last were quite too much;  
And hysterically crying she but wrung her hands and  
lying on the couch kept sighing, sighing—for  
she saw the crucial change,  
And she cried out with decision: "John you must see  
a physician—you are in a bad condition—for  
your actions are so strange!"

## GRAFT AND THE WOMAN

HERE I sit in anger turning pages over! I am burning  
with my rage and stirred with yearning to go  
out and battle graft,

For from what I have been reading all the country lies  
a-bleeding and the cause of right is needing  
Men to meet the arts of Craft;

And my wife in peace is leaning back and idly maga-  
zining, and with accents full of meaning, I ad-  
dress her, for I vow

Some new tale of graft she's reading; but she says: "I  
guess that beading over plain lace edge is  
leading in the fashion books just now."

Then I read a little longer and the tale of graft grows  
stronger. Ah, my Country how they wrong her  
with their dark and sinful deeds!

And I seek to interest her in my Country's needs and  
vest her with this knowledge and arrest her rapt  
attention as she reads.

And I say: "This revelation of the sapping of the Na-  
tion is creating a sensation—have you read the  
tale, my dear?"

But she answers: "Madame Bounce is of opinion and  
announces that the olden style of flounces will  
come in again next year."

## GRAFT AND THE WOMAN

Then again I turn to musing: Is my country really  
losing ground? Are sinful men abusing what  
our fathers cherished so?

Is the sun of honor setting when our statesmen are  
forgetting all the oaths they swore and letting  
graft stalk idly to and fro?

And again to her I'm speaking: "Here's a revelation  
reeking with dishonor—ah, the sneaking thieves,  
their crimes should cost them dear!"

But she says: "The Modern Hatter says that bonnets  
will be flatter and the firm of Click & Clatter  
have some Paris fashions here."

"Madame," said I, "just a minute! Here's a tale with  
sorrow in it—sorrow for the shame and sin it so  
distressingly relates;

Will you listen while I read it? Will you give me ear?  
Indeed, it is enough to make hearts bleed, it is  
all full of names and dates."

Then I read it with dramatic voice that swells from  
roof to attic, with an ardor democratic, and my  
heart was in my words;

And she murmured as I ended that the milliners in-  
tended to use bows of ribbon blended with the  
plumage of rare birds!

## AN INTERRUPTED PREACHMENT

I AM very tired of Money—in the abstract sense, of  
course,  
Though, my feelings, notwithstanding, I appreciate its  
force;  
But the thought comes to me sometimes that I'd like  
to end my ills  
In some place there were no dollars, duns, debts,  
checks, drafts, notes or bills;  
I've supreme contempt for riches—all I want is what  
I need,  
For a half way decent living, but this madness gone  
to seed  
That would garner fruit of millions other men may  
have—not I—  
Just excuse me for a minute—there's a dollar going by.  
  
I've no hungering for millions, for I know that wealth  
has wings,  
Though I'm frank to say that money will buy lots of  
pretty things;  
But this never-ending struggle just to get a dollar  
more  
To a man of my convictions is an everlasting bore;

## AN INTERRUPTED PREACHMENT

And the current weekly wonder as to what will be  
my share  
In the scramble after dollars almost drives me to  
despair.  
For a lodge in some vast wilderness, quite moneyless,  
I sigh—  
Just excuse me for a minute—there's a dollar going by.

I'm aware it's inconsistent to go out and bring it in,  
But somebody else would get it, so it hardly seems a  
sin;  
And the fact is that I need it, as a concrete essence  
which  
Will enable me to dine with all the splendor of the  
rich;  
But the abstract dollar fills me with no feeling but  
disgust,  
And I only go and chase it because Wisdom says I  
must;  
I would preach a little longer, but, alas, the pitcher's  
dry  
And I think I hear the jingle of a dollar going by.



## SIDELIGHTS ON CARVING

DAD says: "It really ain't no work  
To carve, if you know how;  
Bill, jes' you hand me up th' fork,  
I'll show ye, I allow,  
That knowledge of anatomy  
Is all y' need t' know, b' gee!

"Ye stick th' fork firm right in here,  
Above th' breast bone—so,  
A-bein' careful not t' smear  
Th' gravy as ye go."  
Then he jabbed in th' fork, an' whew!  
T' see how far th' gravy flew!

Ma got about a quart or more  
On her best Sunday gound;  
Pa stopped an' looked—he'd like t' swore;  
Y' couldn't hear a sound  
Till Ma says: "No harm done at all.  
Willie, go git my parasol."

## SIDELIGHTS ON CARVING

An' that made Dad th' madder still;  
He hit th' fork a rap,  
An' managed somehow for to spill  
Th' stuffin' in his lap.  
An' Ma says: "All ye need, y' see  
Is knowledge of anatomy."

"I guess I got th' fork in wrong,"  
Pa says, an' jabbed again;  
Th' turkey riz an' slid along  
Th' tablecloth, an' then  
It hit th' parson in th' vest  
An' he jes' says: "Well, well, I'm blessed!"

My, my, how Dad apologized,  
An' took th' turkey back,  
An' squinted long the knife and sized  
Up th' long greasy track  
Upon th' tablecloth—Ma's best  
An' on th' parson's Sunday vest.

He unjointed a wing, an' shot  
It clear across my chair,  
An' Sister Sue she got a lot  
O' stuffin' in her hair,  
An' Dad he stopped, at las' t' howl:  
"Where did ye git this rubber fowl?"

## SIDELIGHTS ON CARVING

Dad looked agin an' then he said:

“Bill, bring th' ax t' me.

Th' ain't no turkey, 'live or dead

Kin flummix me, b' gee!”

An' then th' parson bowed his head:

“Come brethren, let us pray,” he said.

Dad never carves a turkey now

'Thout raisin' in his chair,

An' makin th' whole family bow,

An' while we're standin' there,

He says: “Good Lord, if thou wilt spare,

We'll open this here fowl with prayer!”

## THE FARMER WHO WAITED

A FARMER once sat by the grade of the Soo,  
And waited and waited and waited  
In vain for the road which was soon to come through  
As stated, oft stated, oft stated;  
In storm and in blizzard, in sunshine and rain  
He watched while the gophers were eating his grain,  
But years passed away and his vigil was vain,  
Yet he waited and waited and waited.

The seasons passed out and the seasons came in,  
While he waited and waited and waited;  
He grew pale, faint and weary and sunburned and thin  
Yet he hated, he hated, he hated  
To give up the place by the side of the grade  
Which ages before his forefathers had made  
For he felt that the steel rails were soon to be laid,  
So he waited and waited and waited.

His hair it grew long, and his beard it grew white,  
While he waited and waited and waited;  
Yet he watched through the daytime and watched  
through the night,  
And waited and waited and waited  
His farm buildings crumbled and went to decay,  
The Angel of Death took his neighbors away,  
But he laughed and said: "Gabe, I have come here to  
stay."  
And he stay did, and stay did and stay did.

## THE FARMER WHO WAITED

Years, ages and centuries round him had rolled,  
Yet he waited and waited and waited;  
The last trump had blown and the last bell had tolled,  
Yet he waited and waited and waited;  
Then Gabriel, thinking he hadn't quite heard  
Blew a second long blast, and then even a third,  
But the farmer grinned grimly and never once stirred,  
Just waited and waited and waited.

Then Gabriel came from his station on high  
And pray did and pray did and pray did,  
"Now Gabe," said the farmer, "that's all in your eye,"  
And he waited and waited and waited.  
"My dear sir," said Gabe, "you'll be left all alone."  
"You're wasting your breath for I'm deaf as a stone,"  
Said the farmer and Gabe gave an audible groan,  
And waited and waited and waited.

A million years passed by and still the two stayed  
And waited and waited and waited;  
One day a shrill whistle they heard up the grade,  
Yes they did, yes they did, yes they did.  
"What's that?" said the farmer, and Gabe's wonder  
grew;  
"It's Adam the second," said Gabe. "If that's true,"  
Said the farmer, "I'll bet you he's bringing the Soo!"  
And he fainted and fainted and fainted!

